

WORLD TIMES

FINAL RESULT CSS 2019-20

Applied

23403

Appeared

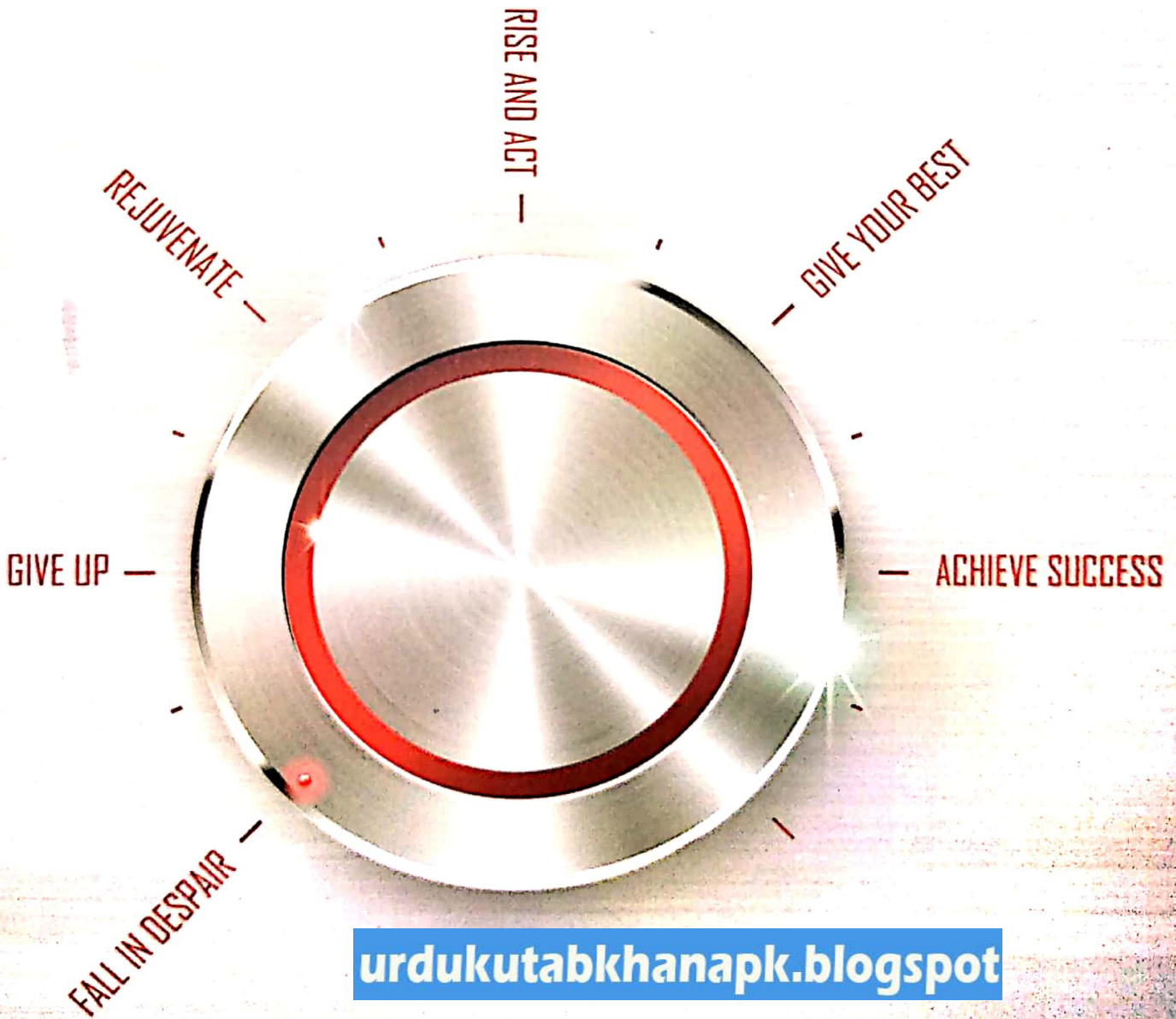
14521

Passed Written

372

Allocated

214



urdukutabkhanapk.blogspot

The Choice is All Yours

Nuclear Deterrence Doctrines of the USA and Russia



The U.S. Department of Defense published the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review on February 2, 2018

Washington, if necessary, is ready to launch nuclear strikes, even if nuclear weapons are not used against the United States, but only conventional weapons. Nuclear weapons can be used in the event of an enemy attack on infrastructure, command posts, and communications networks, not only in the United States, but also within allied nations



On June 2, 2020, President Vladimir Putin approved a state publication, titled "Foundations of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Nuclear Deterrence"

Moscow can use nuclear weapons in response to an attack on it or its allies with the use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, or in the event of aggression with conventional weapons, if "the very existence of the state is threatened"

Major challenges and military threats

Potential adversaries

- 1 **Russia**
The adoption by Russia of military strategies that involve expanding success by building up nuclear potential
- 2 **China**
Introduces new nuclear weapons, challenging the United States in the western part of the Pacific Ocean
- 3 **Iran**
Keeps the technological capabilities necessary to create nuclear weapons
- 4 **Represents an immediate and unpredictable threat to the United States**

Opponent countries are not named in the document

- 1 A potential build-up of general-purpose forces near the borders of Russia, which include means for delivering nuclear weapons
- 2 Placement of nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear states
- 3 The development by a potential adversary of ballistic missiles or hypersonic weapons
- 4 The creation and placement in space of missile defence systems, strike systems
- 5 The presence of nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction which can be used against Russia
- 6 proliferation of nuclear weapons, delivery vehicles and equipment for their manufacture



The development of low-power nuclear systems

The US Navy has a W76-2 low-power nuclear warhead on Trident ballistic missiles on a Tennessee-class submarine

Replacing Ohio-class nuclear submarines with Columbia-class submarines

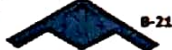
The arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles consists of 500 Minuteman III missiles, their replacement will begin in 2029

The aerial component of the triad consists

of 46 B-52H strategic bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons

20 B-2A strategic nuclear bombers

The programme for the creation and deployment of the B-21 Raider, a next-generation bomber



Modernisation of the nuclear triad

The serial production of the Yars missile system

Yars

In the future, a new heavy mine-based missile system, Sarmat, with an Avangard hypersonic block (which has increased potential for breaking through the enemy's missile defences), will begin to be introduced into the strategic nuclear forces

RS-28 Sarmat Missile

Hypersonic Planning Block

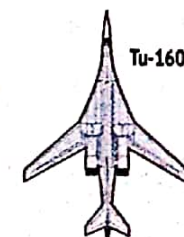
in parallel with the withdrawal of the Topol and Voevoda systems

Voevoda

Missile carriers of the improved project 955A are being built for the Russian Navy, with Bulava ballistic missiles

Submarine Borey A

For the Air Force, the Tu-95MS and Tu-160 missile bombers are being modernised into Tu-95MSM and Tu-160M versions



In Russia, development work is underway to create next-generation strategic bombers



We are witnessing an historic event of people's power and purpose for societal change and the epic of

ruthlessness of the dictators across the globe. Be it in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and elsewhere, leaders claiming to be democratically elected think and behave like absolute monarchs. US President Donald Trump appears to be standing at a crossroads and is engaged in time-killing exercises, not a proactive person recognizing the reality of societal problems and leading to societal peace and harmony and future-making. Trump should be thinking of a navigational change. Mankind needs morally and intellectually responsible leadership. Throughout history, all despots and leaders tried to run down the mankind as if

George Floyd was killed by a police officer who should have protected his life, human dignity and oxygen breathing—natural lifelines—from the encroachment of extremism and brutality. His cry "I can't breathe" is echoed across the globe whether someone knows George or not—a natural sense of belongingness and affirming the reality that 'We the People are One Humanity'. Racism and racial disharmony is a chronic problem created by the socio-economic disparities and political injustice—the perpetuated Capitalism. The insanity of manipulation and injustice needs urgent reconstruction and change.

Mahboob A. Khawaja, PhD
it was just a number, a digit, and a conscious-less entity. We are witnessing the continued abuse and cruelty in Kashmir, Palestine, Yemen, Syria and many parts of South America. But, all of those leaders fell in disgrace, destroying their own nations and empires. America was enriched with intellectual foresights and democratic history to safeguard the deprived humanity. But its contemporary leaders and major institutions seem to defy the logic of co-existing with the global humanity. For sure, American leaders lack even the essence of Thomas Paine's historic "Common Sense" to political change, but historical change will replace America's global leadership image with others' more understanding and relevance to the mankind. After almost four years of "America

+92-310-545-450-3

For Applicants ebooks & Notes

Telegram: @groups/458184410965870

Ants Forum

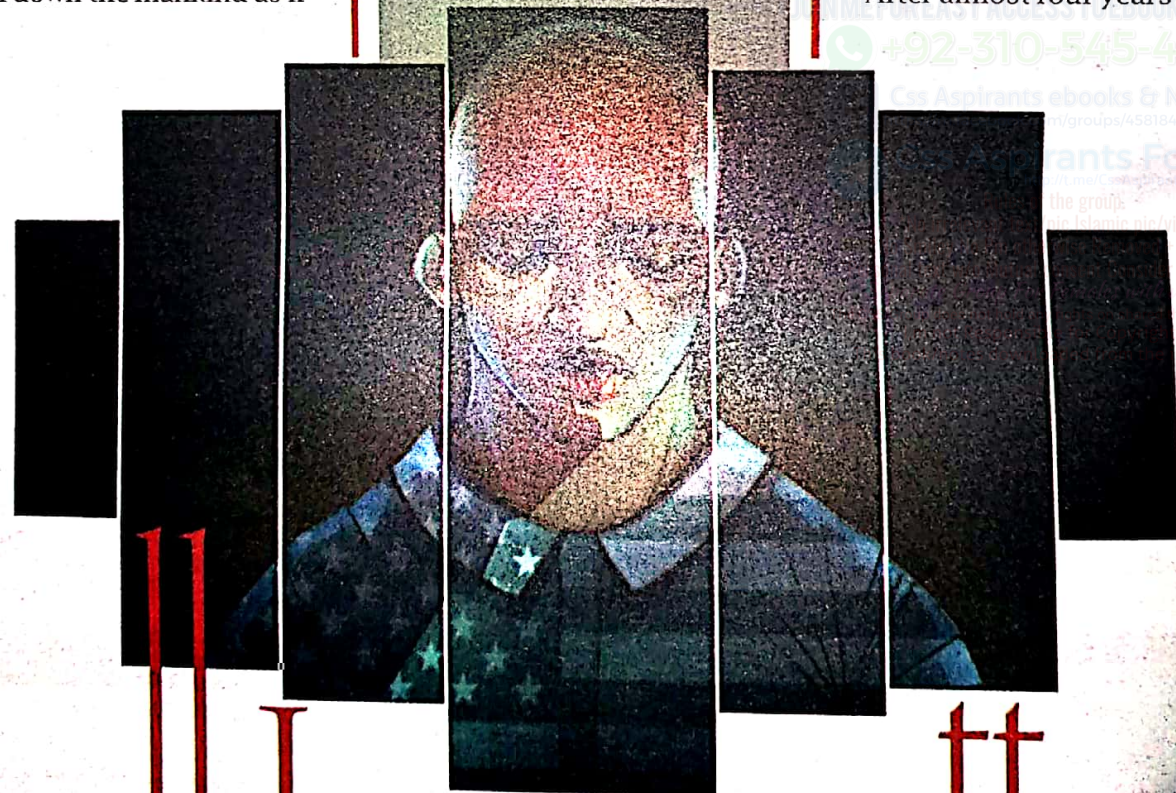
the groups

the Islamic nia/videos

Blocked harassment

Books & Notes

Internet



All Lives Matter

HUMAN RIGHTS, DIGNITY AND GLOBAL PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

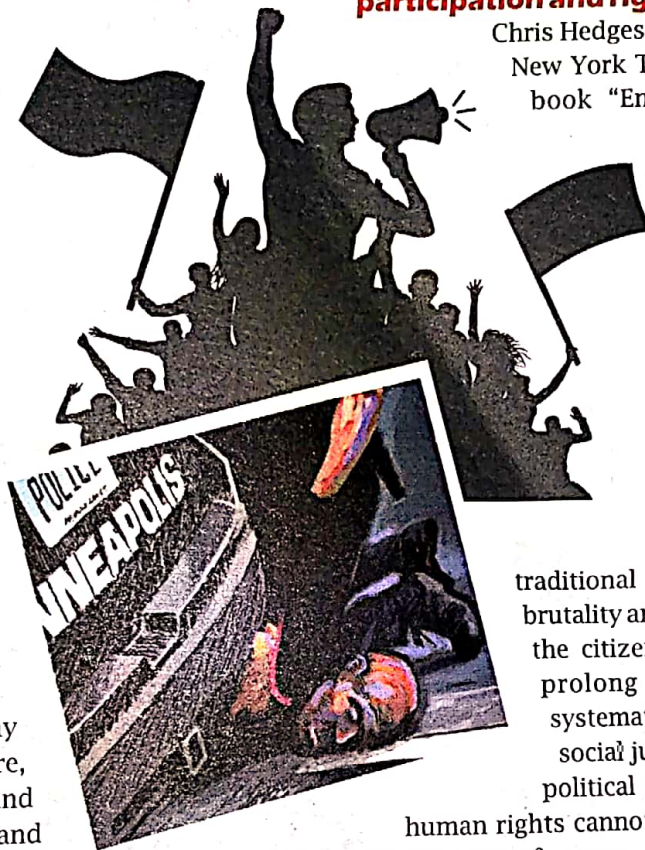
INTERNATIONAL

First" absolutism of Donald Trump and numerous racial-political discords, history will judge President Trump by his actions, not by his claims.

George Floyd died for equal rights and justice

The tragic death of George Floyd reminds us of all the revulsion against the failure of working democracy, economic injustice, subjugation of the people of colour, psychological and political evil, and insane tyranny against the blacks and the people of colour. President Trump's 'America First' slogan reflects painful temptation and socioeconomic and political compulsion of systematic evil embedded in capitalism and the class of the people who claim supremacy to govern the less fortunate and poverty-stricken people of colour. All colours, and all lives for that matter, do matter if we claim to be rational human beings, the species populating the God-given One Planet—Earth. We the People, the Humanity are colourful and beautiful.

The Earth encompasses many sharp diversities—air, water, fire, colourful and colourless, hot and cold, white and black, deserts and rivers and seas, earth and heaven, visible and invisible, the sun and the moon, right and wrong—all coexist in harmony without breaking the limits of rationality but we, the human beings, are so disingenuous for not being able to learn from the nature of things around us and part of our daily life. We must rethink about planned change in our inner thoughts and souls to treat others equally and with dignity, if we expect to be treated justly and fairly within the socioeconomic and political compound of the society. How strange this is what Dr Martin Luther King Jr. preached and advocated in the Civil Rights Movement across America, yet, he was met by forceful resistance and denial of his basic human rights, dignity and ideals. "I can't breathe" does not dictate a necessity from Donald Trump or a revolution, but deserves a rethinking of equal rights and social emancipation, as well as sustainable future-making.



Ostensibly, the people of colour, including the natives and the indigenous people, must be treated equally as we are all human beings living on this splendid Earth and in the universe that sustains life and all that we could imagine. Opinions could vary but truth is one: capitalism has created more problems than conceivable economic remedies for the common folks.

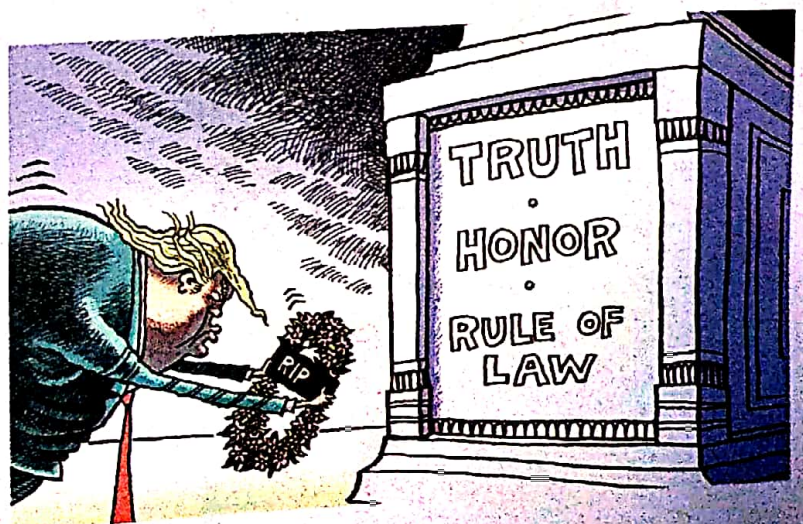
Socioeconomic and political systems of equal participation and rights

Chris Hedges, a foreign correspondent for The New York Times and the author of a recent book "Empire of Illusion: The End of

Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle," contributes a realist observation in his article 'The Ghoulish Face of Empire'. "The language of violence engenders violence. The language of hate engenders hate. I and the public know what all schoolchildren learn. ... It is as old as the Bible."

We must think honestly and plan workable solutions, not traditional legal investigations into police brutality and abuse of basic human rights of the citizens. Often formal investigations prolong for ages without warranted systematic remedies and the need for social justice is rebuked by the changing political gossips. Abuse and violation of

human rights cannot go on unchecked and reshaped by the logic of reason and political justice forever. The masses are out on streets and roads and across the halls of fame, and it cannot be stopped by the misuse of power against the innocent people—the protesters. They are not



'thugs' as Trump claims but human beings with legitimate cause for societal change. Any intervention will be futile and short-lived unless drastic humanitarian changes are integrated into the working of the so-called democratic societies. We must aim at people-to-people dialogue—how to change and make the forces of abuse, racial discrimination and brutality into the working of the systematic governance for the best of masses. Perpetuated evil is deprivation of One Humanity. The historical change that Dr Martin Luther King Jr. called for needs political, social and psychological factors to be integrated into the working systems of democratic governance, and adaptation to the world of reason and reality for continuous change and defined objective values for a new threshold of human respect, honour and dignity for all lives—that matter. Mr Trump hurriedly wants to fix the long-standing historic injustice against the black and indigenous people simply to get ready for the forthcoming presidential election. The need is urgent to evolve a new system of people-oriented governance, respecting the norms and promises of a just and fair system of equal rights and human dignity before law and justice. In its history of political development, America has to

strive a long way to ensure its political ideals being part of the 'commonsense' and the constitution. American politicians and decision-makers must learn what is going on the streets and listen to the voices of reason for socioeconomic and political change. Paul Street did echo a rational message "For Intelligent Civilizations on Earth". We must reason for an instinctive recognition of social, economic and political injustice across the globe, and logically try to transform the world of political wickedness, disharmony, socioeconomic and political deprivation and exploitation into a world of moral, intellectual and spiritual reasoning, and be passionate and hopeful for constructive changes in thoughts and behaviours—be it the policing or the masses' march on streets and halls of fame, our aim and wisdom must be focused on purpose: a different, better world of tomorrow and continuous change to be monitored and assessed by the people of knowledge and reason to ensure that we do not cross over the limits of the laws of nature deserving punishment



from God—the Creator and Sustainer of all the lives, the Earth and the Universe that matter to us all as human beings. The aggressive violations of human rights, dignity and equal participation should not lead to a Third World War against us by us. Its consequences will be unthinkable and catastrophic for the human civilizations claiming to be intelligent and just as it happened during the Second World War. The warmongers and their cruelty against the fellow human beings were not punished in its entirety. ■

Dr Mahboob A. Khawaja specializes in international affairs—global security, peace and conflict resolution with keen interest in Islamic-Western comparative cultures and civilizations. He is the author of several publications including the latest: One Humanity and the Remaking of Global Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution; Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany.

The Post- Corona World

It was the best of times,
it was the worst of times ...

Asad Ejaz Butt

F I've months, more than ten million affected and half a million deaths, and the endgame to the worst crisis that humanity has faced cannot still be predicted.

International governments, development organizations, global healthcare systems and medical response units are all 'stunned'.

Doctors and health professionals are overwhelmed by the scale and intensity of the pandemic whose origins are known with little certainty and whose end no one knows. In a few more weeks, the crisis would hit its peak, causing severe and irreparable damage to the humanity and the economies and global systems that were built painstakingly, but with a touch of arrogance. Many observers believe that it's a wake-up call for humanity; religious clerics think it's a reprehension for violating religious injunctions and having forgotten the path of God. Doomsday-sellers believe that the end of the human race is near.

When World War II ended, analysts wrote that the world had become a different place to live in. Many thought that peace was the logical conclusion of the war and it was the ultimate state in which humanity shall dwell in the years after the war. It was a world with several postwar characteristics. The traditional way of looking at the world, its resources and the international political system had all changed while new systems evolved and institutions that could keep pace with the rapidly-changing world emerged. But what the war had changed the most was the way countries interacted and looked at the world. There was a shared sense of existence. Countries

were more eager to take responsibility of their surroundings—the world outside. This came to be known as the new world order; the order of peace and co-existence. Dispute-resolution mechanisms were erected and international development organizations, especially in the follow-up to the Marshall Plan, became busy in using monetary imbalances in favour of the developed world to serve specific political and economic ends in the developing world. Their aid caused development as well as havoc in the recipient countries. Results have been mixed, but many analysts write that they skew towards the latter.

Counterintuitively however, deep-seated hatred between states continued to have its place and animosities intensified. By mid 1950s, the Cold War between the USA and the USSR—the two leading world powers



INTERNATIONAL

at that time—began to take shape and achieve ignominious heights. Each of the two powers wanted its particular brand of politics to emerge as the pathway to the overarching global order of peace and coexistence. International relations experts called it the bipolar world. Loyalties were won and bought, countries switched allegiances as both communism and capitalism gained ground. Communism met its ultimate demise in 1991 with the breakaway of the USSR into several eastern European, Central Asian and Baltic states. The world became unipolar. It has remained the same in the last three decades and as George Friedman predicts in his magnum opus "Next 100 Years," in all likelihood, the United States would remain the global superpower till the close of the 21st century. He denies predictions that China can become a challenger to the American superiority by claiming that China's landlockedness and regional disputes with its East Asian neighbours would either contain it or cause its downfall, paving the way for the USA to continue staying on top. Without a doubt, the postwar world was a changed place but was the peace that it achieved during the early 1950s sustainable? There are several answers to this question that I shall explore in greater detail hereunder. The twin attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 jolted the world order. Although the world didn't become bipolar again, it was certain that the containment of conflictual

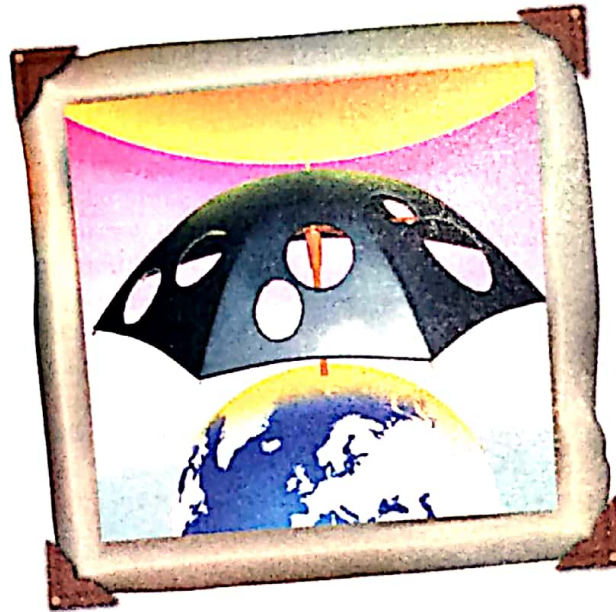
relations between states, end to brutal use of force and attainment of everlasting peace would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Many died in drawn-out conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and thereafter during the Arab Spring. Civil wars in the Muslim world and on the African continent replaced world wars while non-state actors began to substitute states. International organizations that were established to keep peace failed and questions on their ability to resolve disputes were raised. The world was a changed place after the wars, but it hadn't learnt its lesson. Realist interests and right-wing nationalism still dictated the international political system. In fact, this worsened further in 2015 when populists started taking over and much of what was achieved collectively and with consensus by the international community—steps in the right direction towards peace and collective prosper-

ity—was at the risk of being lost. Countries continued to breed hostilities against each other, regional disputes escalated, and nationalities, ethnicities and religion were shaping how states deal with their people and with each other. At the cusp of 2020 now, we have regressed to 1920 when, after World War I, the Treaty of Versailles was being negotiated. These two seminal events in hindsight aggravated matters, instead of containing them.

Slightly backtracking to 2019; a weak unipolar world with American hegemony diluted by the presence of the G20 including the emerging economies (e.g. BRICS). Many countries including China are trying to break into the American sphere of influence. China is a contender but for once, not a close one. The size of its economy stands up to that of the US (as per the World Bank data, China's GDP has surpassed that of the US in PPP terms) but its development deficits and political instability may not allow it to

challenge the society and systems that define the modern-day United States. Many would argue that the systems that define the US are withering away, and the stability upon which the great empire was built has begun to shake under the influence of the discriminatory and divisive politics of President Donald Trump. The American society, and the development that it has achieved, still leads one to imagine a world led by the US in 2050. The Trump's America is much different to what it was under Clinton when unipolarism was a recent phenomenon.

But, most of the changes that have occurred under Trump have only resulted in a deteriorated perception of America around the world, and has brought some loss of repute to its voters who are now seen as somewhat less rational and tolerant. There is very little damage that Trump may have done to the great institutions and systems that form the United States. The changes that he has brought to the society are no less damaging but their bearing on the susceptibility of the US to an imminent decline is weak. Ethnic and colour factionalism and political division in the aftermath of the 9/11 have rendered the US a staggeringly more polarized society than the one that would have pitched it favourably toward stability. Two defining characteristics of the US that it clings onto ever more tenaciously are 'capitalism' and 'democracy'. Not only has it held onto these defining characteristics of its identity,



INTERNATIONAL

but ever since the fall of the USSR, has also preached them, with utmost ease and without much opposition, as the most desirable economic and political systems to the world. In doing so, it has met large successes in the developing world where, propelled by foreign aid and international development institutions, its agenda of sweeping the world over by democracy and capitalism has been an easy business. Both capitalism and democracy together have lent quite naturally to globalization—a process by which goods, people, information and culture are allowed to move swiftly across countries and continents. International trade and laxer visa regimes and immigration policies became popular facilitators in the process (this, of course, changed drastically under Trump).

The developed world benefited most out of this arrangement, followed by some emerging markets that have now started taking a larger share of the pie, especially ever since the Eurozone economic crisis made it a weaker partner in the deal. The developing world, which had to become the ultimate beneficiary of the process, has albeit gained, but its gains are trivialized in the face of the excesses that the US has made. Since opening its borders in 1979, China gained enormously. Today, it has become an economic force to reckon with. For China, US and several other developed countries of the

world, the growth of capitalism, globalization and their own brand of democracy was a win-win situation. They could make money from international trade and use the same to advance political agenda.

As the winners celebrated success and rejoiced their victory over all pre-existing political and economic systems, writers like Francis Fukuyama wrote that it was the 'end of history'. At the same, cautioners cautioned; they rang alarm bells over the superficiality of the international financial system and lack of sustainability therein, underlying capitalist tendencies like the promotion of consumerism. Some of those cracks prevalent in the international financial system, globalization and the American-style democracy have now come in the open through the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The world today is in a fix. States are announcing stimulus packages in whatever big or small capacities they can. The coffers of international organizations are depleting

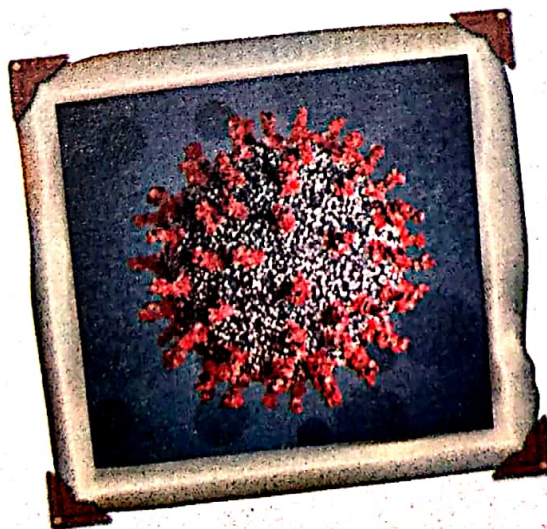
which puts developing economies at the peril of defaulting once their indigenous funds run out. Many of these states have tax revenues below 10% of GDP disallowing their respective governments to enact social safety nets, provide for reasonable health and education infrastructure and to protect marginalized groups like the elderly, children and the unemployed. The business community and the private sector entrepreneurs that often express a strong distaste for the government and hardly ever want to pay taxes are now looking towards an under-resourced



state, which is also the case in Pakistan, to do magic all of a sudden and attain the multiple ends of safeguarding their business interests by announcing stimulus packages, protecting their ex-employees through unemployment benefit schemes and allowing greater tax rebates and refunds so that their enterprise could rehabilitate as soon as lockdowns are lifted. The average citizen, who also denies paying taxes and expresses distrust in the state, is now looking towards it for protection against the

unavail ability of staple food items and an unexpected loss of income.

It is sad to think that globalization and capitalism have failed many including my friends Chomsky, Fukuyama, right-wing populists and private sector entrepreneurs. It has left them at the behest of a state that they advocated was malevolent and ill-meaning. The gods of fortune today smile at the state. Left-wingers seem to dance and prance from the aisles. It's bad times for the world but a moment of victory for the global left. ■



A

slew of recent announcements on China by US President Donald Trump is a clear indication that the competition between the United States and China is likely to sharpen in the post-Covid world.

On May 29, the Trump administration said it would revoke Hong Kong's special trade status under US law. The administration also passed an order limiting the entry of certain Chinese graduate students and researchers who may have ties with the People's Liberation Army. The US President has also ordered financial regulators to closely examine Chinese firms listed in US stock markets, and warned those that do not comply with US laws could be delisted.

Complicit in China's rise

Americans have had a strange fascination for China ever since the early 1900s when Protestant missionaries decided that it was God's work to bring salvation to the Chinese. Books like *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck and *Red Star Over China* by Edgar Snow in the 1930s romanticised the country. Even after the Chinese communists seized power, the Americans hoped to cohabit with Mao Zedong in a world under US hegemony. The Chinese allowed them to believe this and extracted their price. US President Richard Nixon gave

China the international acceptability it craved in return for being admitted to Mao's presence in 1972; President Jimmy Carter terminated diplomatic relations with Taiwan in order to normalise relations with China in 1978; President George H.W. Bush washed away the sins of Tiananmen in 1989 for ephemeral geopolitical gain; and Bill Clinton, who as a presidential candidate had criticised Bush for indulging the Chinese, proceeded as President to usher the country into the World Trade Organization at the expense of American business. All American administrations since the 1960s have been complicit in China's rise in the unrealised hope that it will become a 'responsible stakeholder' under Pax Americana.

Disguising its real purpose

The Chinese are hard-nosed and unsentimental about the US. They have always pursued America with a selfish purpose, albeit couched in high principle. They have spoken words that the Americans wanted to hear—anti-Soviet rhetoric during the Cold War and market principles thereafter—to disguise their real purpose of thwarting US hegemony. Ever since Cold Warrior John Foster Dulles spoke in 1958 of weaning China and other "satellites" away from the Soviets through regime change, known as "peaceful evolution," every Chinese

Relations between the United States and China have plunged to a nadir in recent weeks. On May 15, President Donald Trump threatened to "cut off the whole relationship" with China over the Covid-19 pandemic, which according to him, originated in Chinese city of Wuhan. He had earlier called the coronavirus a "Chinese virus" and threatened to seek compensation from China for the damages caused by the outbreak. The rising tensions between the two superpowers have prompted many experts to warn of a new Cold War. A rising chorus of American voices now argues that confronting China should become the organizing principle of US foreign policy, akin to the Cold War against the Soviet Union. Although it would be a strategic error, hawks in Trump administration openly push for a more aggressive

A Chill in US-China Relations

A new Cold War in the offing?



INTERNATIONAL

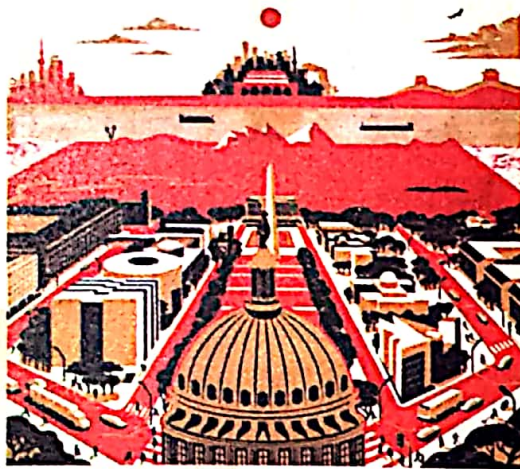
China in US politics

President Donald Trump is entering deeper into a political quagmire on three related fronts: America's death toll from Covid-19 is perilously over the psychologically important mark of 100,000; the economy looks to be on the verge of slipping into a deep, if not outright, depression, in the wake of the pandemic impact across sectors; and his management of both the crises is facing acerbic criticism from Democrats even as the 2020 US presidential election draws closer. There is one factor that links all three political hazards he is facing—China. On the pandemic front, Trump has regularly tweeted to the effect that the novel coronavirus ought to be called the "China virus" and his top officials including Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, have made unsubstantiated suggestions that the virus may have leaked out of a Wuhan laboratory. While Trump appeared relatively more mollified after a call with Chinese President Xi Jinping in late March, he reverted to name-calling a few weeks thereafter. Beijing meanwhile has concertedly pushed a campaign around the message that the virus—contrary to any publicly verified evidence—originated outside China. On the economic front, the savage trade war that roiled global markets through most of 2019 appeared to be near a resolution when Washington and Beijing inked the 'Phase One' pact for lower tariffs and trade concessions this January. The pandemic appears to have set that process back considerably; neither side will be in the mood to make concessions given that tens of

millions of jobs have been lost in the US and China is far from an economic recovery.

It is however the third factor, the presidential poll in November, that could most significantly alter the landscape of conflict-ridden bilateral ties. Democratic nominee and former Vice President, Joe Biden, has, for several months, launched scathing attacks on Trump's bungling in the early phases of viral transmission, including repeated messaging that the President was slow to respond to warning signs from Wuhan and reluctant to lock down the US to enforce physical distancing. Pro-Trump campaign organisations have, in turn, taken to labelling Biden, "Beijing Biden," which gives Democrats the tough choice of either attacking or defending China. If Biden does either, he will open himself up to political attacks. There is, however, a third way. If he steps back from the brink of what some analysts are describing as the potential "New Cold War," based on the understanding that neither side would stand to gain from the cumulative tally of economic and geopolitical conflict, he may not only avert a torrid clash between the two nations, but in the process he might win over economically insecure, independent and undecided voters across the US, who are decisively important to secure an election victory. Not only the US and China, but the world at large, might stand to gain if he did that.

leader from Chairman Mao to President Xi Jinping has been clear-eyed that the US represents an existential threat to the continued supremacy of the communist regime. Mao put it best, when he told high-ranking leaders in November 1959, that the "US is attempting to carry out



its aggression and expansion with a much more deceptive tactic... In other words, it wants to keep its order and change our system." (Memoirs, Chinese leader Bo Yibo). The collapse of the Soviet Union only reinforced this view and strengthened China's resolve to resist by creating its own parallel universe. China is building an alternate trading system (the Belt and Road Initiative); a multilateral banking system under its control (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, New Development Bank); its own

global positioning system (BeiDou); digital payment platforms (WeChat Pay and Alipay); a world-class digital network (Huawei 5G); cutting-edge technological processes in sunrise industries; and a modern military force. It is doing this under the noses of the Americans and some of it with the financial and technological resources of the West.

Voices of caution have been few and far between; among them political scientist John Mearsheimer, who wrote in 2005 that the rise of China would not be peaceful at all, but the world chose to believe General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Hu Jintao's assurances about "peaceful rise". When satellite evidence showed that China

INTERNATIONAL

was building military installations in the South China Sea, China's Southeast Asian neighbours and the US preferred to believe assurances to the contrary given by President Xi Jinping on the lawns of the White House in 2015.

It is only under Mr Trump that the Americans are finally acknowledging the uneasy fact that the Chinese are not graven in their image. He has called China out on trade practices. He has called China out on 5G. It was Trump's 2017 National Security Strategy document that, perhaps for the first time, clubbed China along with Russia as a challenge to American power, influence and interests. His recent China-specific restrictions on trade and legal migration are, possibly, only the beginning of a serious re-adjustment.

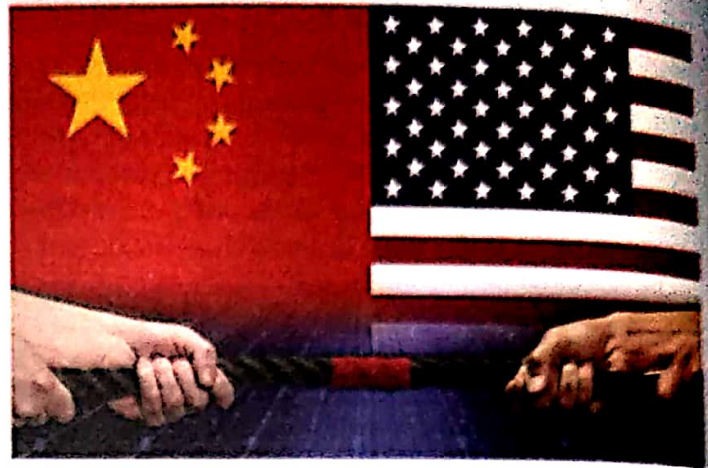
A full-spectrum debate on China is now raging across the US. Former White House Chief of Staff, Steve Bannon, declared that the US is already at war with China. Others like diplomat Richard Haass and former president of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, warn that a new Cold War will be a mistake. Scholar Julian Gewirtz, in his brilliant essay, 'The Chinese Reassessment of Interdependence', talks



about a similar process under way in Beijing. Both sides are acutely aware how closely their economies are tied together: from farm to factory, the US is heavily dependent on supply chains in China and the Chinese have been unable to break free of the dollar. If Trump's wish is to disentangle China's supply chains, Xi is equally determined to escape from the US 'chokehold' on technology. To what extent the de-coupling is possible is yet to be determined.

The Hong Kong question

Will Hong Kong become a game-changer in the post-Covid world? China's decision to enact the new national security law for Hong Kong has been condemned in unison by the US and its Western allies as an assault on human freedoms. Why is this significant? The points of divergence, even dispute, between them have so far been in the material realm. With Hong Kong, the US-China rivalry may, possibly, be entering the ideological domain. For some time now, there are reports about Chinese interference in



the internal affairs of democracies. Countries in the West have tackled this individually, always mindful of not jeopardising their trade with China. Hong Kong may be different. It is not only a bastion for Western capitalism in the East, but more importantly the torch-bearer of Western democratic ideals. Think of it as a sort of Statue of Liberty; it holds aloft the torch of freedom and democracy for all those who pass through Hong Kong en route to China. This is an assault on beliefs, so to speak.

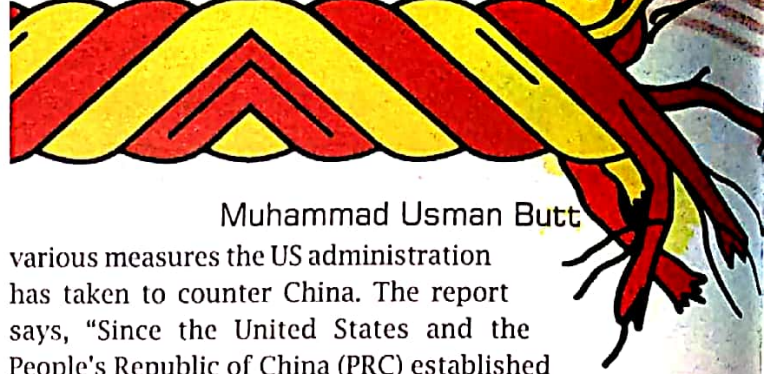
This comes on the back of not unreasonable demands that China should come clean on its errors of omission in the early days of Covid-19, when greater transparency and quicker action might have prevented, or at least mitigated, the pandemic. In the months ahead, more information may become public, from sources inside China itself, about the shortcomings of the regime, that will further fuel a debate on the superiority of the Chinese Model as an alternative to democracy. Will this form the ideological underpinning for the birth of a new Cold War? That will depend on who wins in Washington in November; on whether profit will again trump politics in Europe; and on how skilfully the Wolf Warriors of China can manipulate global public opinion. The lines are beginning to be drawn between the Americans on the one side, and China on the other. ■



Trump's New China Strategy

A Deft Brand of Hard-Nosed Realism

To meet a key requirement of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, the White House recently released a report titled as "United States Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China," whereby the Trump administration has detailed its future approach to China. The 16-page document demonstrates that, independent of the nature of the outbreak, the tension between China and the United States will continue to exist in the coming years. In the link of the report, it said that since the two countries established diplomatic relations the US policy toward China has largely been premised on a hope that deepening engagement would spur fundamental economic and political opening of China. However, the rapid economic development of China and the trends are not as what the US had hoped, it continues.



Muhammad Usman Butt

various measures the US administration has taken to counter China. The report says, "Since the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC) established diplomatic relations in 1979, US policy toward the PRC was largely premised on a hope that deepening engagement would spur fundamental economic and political opening in the PRC, and lead to its emergence as a constructive and responsible global stakeholder, with a more open society. More than 40 years later, it has become evident that this approach underestimated the will of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to constrain the scope of economic and political reform in China." It further says, "The CCP's expanding use of economic, political, and military power to compel acquiescence from nation states harms vital American interests and undermines the sovereignty and dignity of countries and individuals around the world."

The importance of this statement is that it is not simply a hawkish Pentagon refrain; it is rather a whole-of-government consensus that was signed off by all relevant US agencies, and which increasingly reflects the position of other leading Western states.

Goals and Objectives

The report says, "Our approach is not premised on determining a particular end state for China. Rather, our goal is to protect United States' vital national interests, as articulated in the four pillars of the 2017 National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS)."

1. Protect the American people, homeland and way of life;
2. Promote American prosperity;
3. Preserve peace through strength; and
4. Advance American influence

Hence, the report states that the competitive approach to China has two objectives:

1. To improve the resiliency of US institutions, alliances and partnerships to prevail against the challenges China presents; and
2. To compel Beijing to cease or reduce actions harmful to the United States' vital, national interests and those of US allies and partners.

Over the recent months, there have been clarion calls from the strategists and analysts about a Cold War between China and the United States. If there was any doubt about the gravity of this situation, which could absolutely lead to a full-blown kinetic conflict between the world's two major superpowers, the White House, on May 20, released a detailed paper outlining changes to the "United States Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China". The report says that Beijing's efforts under the leadership of President Xi Jinping challenge the American belief in the right of every person to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The report also says the US has significant interests in the future of Hong Kong, where a large number of US citizens and businesses reside.

The instant piece presents a critical analysis of the report.

Background

In this report, the Trump administration reiterated its reasoning: A supposedly "clear-eyed" assessment has confirmed China as a strategic competitor in economic, ideological, and national-security terms. The report starts with China-bashing and asserts that the American policy of engagement with China has failed. The report says that, instead of reciprocating the benefits it has received, China has persistently posed a challenge to the US in economic, values and security fields in the past 20 years. It also lists

INTERNATIONAL

Challenges Identified

1. Economic Challenges

- a) Beijing's poor record of following through on economic reform commitments and its extensive use of state-driven protectionist policies and practices harm United States' companies and workers, distort global markets, violate international norms, and pollute the environ-



ment.

- b) Beijing's economic policies have led to massive industrial overcapacity that distorts global prices and allows China to expand global market share at the expense of competitors operating without the unfair advantages that Beijing provides to its firms.

- c) One Belt, One Road (OBOR) is Beijing's umbrella term to describe a variety of initiatives, many of which appear designed to reshape international norms, standards and networks to advance Beijing's global interests and vision, while also serving China's domestic economic requirements.

- d) Given Beijing's increasing use of economic leverage to extract political concessions from or exact retribution against other countries, the United States judges that Beijing will attempt to convert OBOR projects into undue political influence and military access.

- e) Beijing has restricted trade and tourism with Australia, Canada, South Korea, Japan, Norway, the Philippines and others, and has detained Canadian citizens, in an effort to interfere in these countries' internal political and judicial processes.

2. To American Values

- a) Under the current generation of leadership, the CCP has accelerated its efforts to portray its governance system as functioning better than those of what it refers to as "developed, Western countries."

- b) Beijing is clear that it sees itself as engaged in an ideological competition with the West.

- c) The CCP aims to make China a global leader in terms of comprehensive national power and international influence by strengthening what it refers to as "the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics."

- d) This system is rooted in Beijing's interpretation of Marxist-Leninist

ideology and combines a nationalistic, single-party dictatorship; a state-directed economy; deployment of science and technology in the service of the state; and the subordination of individual rights to serve CCP ends.

- e) This runs counter to principles shared by the United States and many like-minded countries of representative



government, free enterprise, and the inherent dignity and worth of every individual.

- f) Beijing regularly attempts to compel or persuade Chinese nationals and others to undertake a range of malign behaviours that threaten United States' national and economic security, and undermine academic freedom and the integrity of the United States research and development enterprise.

3. Security Challenges

- a) As China has grown in strength, so has the willingness and capacity of the CCP to employ intimidation and coercion in its attempts to eliminate perceived threats to its interests and advance its strategic objectives globally.

- b) Beijing contradicts its rhetoric and flouts its commitments to its neighbours by engaging in provocative and coercive military and paramilitary activities in the Yellow Sea, the East and South China Seas, the Taiwan Strait, and

Sino-Indian border areas.

- c) Beijing's military build-up threatens United States and allied national security interests and poses complex challenges for global commerce and supply chains.

- d) Beijing's Military-Civil Fusion (MCF) strategy gives the PLA unfettered access into civil entities developing and acquiring advanced technologies, including state-owned and private firms, universities, and research programs.

Future Course of Action

- a) Guided by a return to principled realism, the United States is responding to the CCP's direct challenge by acknowledging that we are in a

What is Principled Realism?

In his speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2018, US President Donald Trump emphasized once again his foreign policy of "principled realism". According to him, America's policy of principled realism means "we will not be held hostage to old dogmas, discredited ideologies and so-called experts who have been proven wrong over the years, time and time again." In its simplest terms, it's the faith that America's goals are just and American power should be exercised to support those goals. It is guided by outcomes, not ideology.

strategic competition, and protecting our interests appropriately.

b) The United States does not and will not accommodate Beijing's actions that weaken a free, open and rules-based international order.

c) The United States will work with the robust network of allies and likeminded partners to resist attacks on shared norms and values, within the indigenous governance institutions, around the world, and in international organizations.

d) Competition necessarily includes engagement with the PRC, but US engagements are selective and results-oriented, with each advancing American national interests. **Chinese narrative as stated by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian**

Just like the 2017 NSS, this new report deliberately distorts China's political system and strategic intention and hypes up the so-called "China threat," a pretext it uses to trumpet the continuation of all-dimensional hardline policy against China. In response to the US erroneous words and deeds to interfere in China's internal affairs and harm China's interests over the past two years or so, China has stated its solemn position multiple times and made firm, strong responses. Facts have proven that the US approach and policy following the Cold-War mentality and ideological prejudice has been fundamentally wrong from the very beginning, and thus doomed to fail. I would like to stress the following points.

First, since the People's Republic of China was founded 70 years ago, the Chinese people, under the strong leadership of the CPC, have found a development path in line with the country's national realities and achieved great progress to the amazement of the world, making contributions to world peace, stability and development. The past and reality have shown that the development path chosen by the Chinese people is entirely correct and we have every confidence in it. We will press ahead for greater victory while staying committed to socialism with Chinese characteristics. No one can stop China from growing stronger.

Second, after China and the US established diplomatic ties, the past 40 years or so have fully demonstrated that both sides stand to gain from cooperation, and lose from confrontation. Cooperation is the only right choice. Neither side can change or replace the other. The so-called failure to engage or change China in the US report is nonsense. For two major countries with different national conditions to get along, need mutual respect, equality and the approach of seeking common ground while shelving differences. The US also said in the report that it does not seek to contain

China's development. We urge the US to match its words with deeds and earnestly respect China's core interests and major concerns instead of saying one thing and doing another.

Third, China's policy towards the US is consistent and clear. We are committed to working with the US side to realize the goal of no conflict or confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation. At the same time, we firmly safeguard China's national sovereignty, security and development interests. If the US seeks dialogue and cooperation, we are here welcoming that. If they aim for containment and oppression, we will resolutely take countermeasures and the US will not have its way.

Fourth, China-US relations are now at a critical juncture. A stable and growing China-US relationship serves the fundamental interests of the two peoples and is what the international community is looking forward to. We urge the US side to abandon its Cold War mentality and ideological bias, follow the trend of the times, view China and China-US relations in an objective and rational way, immediately stop interfering in China's internal affairs, harming China's interests or undermining China-US relations, and work with China to bring bilateral relations back onto the right track.

Analysis

One word that best describes US strategy is: Hubristic, i.e. "excessive pride or self-confidence"; misplaced arrogance; the absence of humility.

The report is filled with a sheer hegemonic mentality and every single sentence aims to protect US national interests.



The US became a global hegemon after World War II and has always hoped to change the world in accordance with its own will. It is the same approach with which it deals with China. Reading through the report, we can sense the US' toughness and even menace. But we can also see that the US has an explicit stance in matters of principle. Despite all of its provocative actions on Taiwan, the report states that the US "will continue to maintain strong unofficial relations with

Taiwan in accordance with our 'One China' policy, based on the Taiwan Relations Act and the three United States-PRC Joint Communiqués."

It is worth noting that the report was released against the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The US and China have not cooperated on this common human enemy. Rather, the pandemic has become a catalyst for the worsening strategic competition between the two major powers. The US has mounted its strategic guard against China, and China-US relations have come to a crossroads.

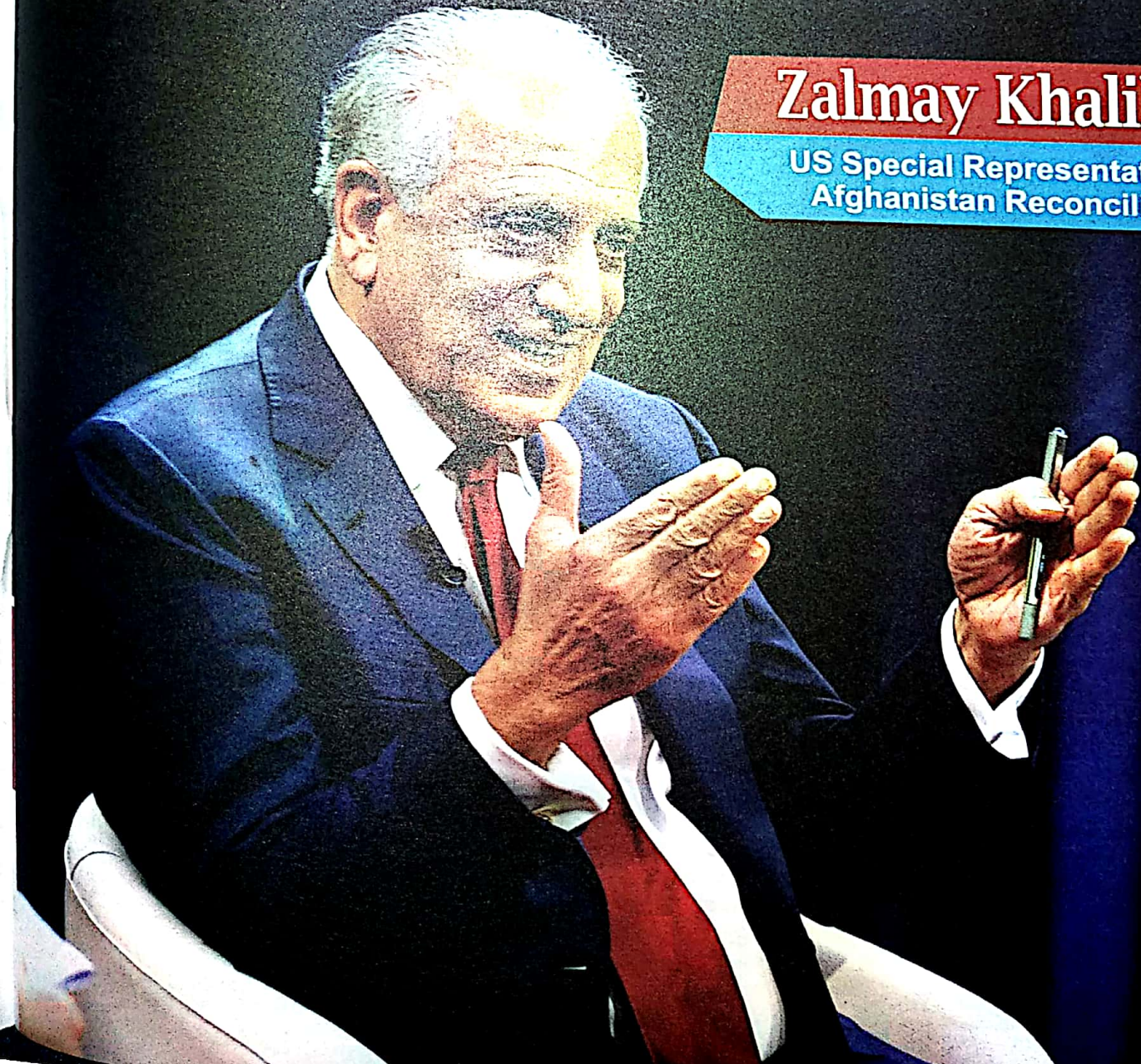
Exclusive Interview

On May 08, US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, who travelled to New Delhi with a brief whereby US urged India not to create hurdles in the Afghan peace efforts, gave an interview to The Hindu newspaper. During this interview, Mr Khalilzad stressed India's "significant" role in Afghanistan's development, citing "historic ties" between the two countries and shared concerns over terrorist groups active there. He said that India had a "significant role" in Afghanistan's development, but paradoxically, doesn't play a role in the international peace efforts. He also praised Pakistan by saying that the Pakistani leadership had supported the peace process. This interview offers a look into the future of Pakistan and the role of India and Pakistan therein. For JWT readers, this interview is being published verbatim.

"I believe that the Pakistani leadership has supported the peace process, and the time has come for economic strategy, for trade and development and for Afghanistan to become a platform for regional cooperation and connectivity."

Zalmay Khalilzad

US Special Representative for
Afghanistan Reconciliation



Exclusive Interview

Magazine Desk

Question: It is rare for anyone to be travelling during the coronavirus lockdown, let alone high officials. Tell us what brought you to the region, and how your meetings went?

Answer: The mission is to encourage movement towards the implementation of the US-Taliban agreement signed at Doha in February. Part of the confidence-building measures leading to intra-Afghan negotiations is that both the Taliban and the Afghan government have to release prisoners on both sides. Secondly, there must be a reduction in violence compared to the period before the agreement was signed, and thirdly, in order to get lasting peace and bring the long war in Afghanistan to an end, we

think as the peace process gets more serious, and the US-Taliban agreement goes into the next stages, we want India to take a more active role in the peace process, and that was a key focus of our discussion in Delhi.

Question: Did you also discuss the possibility of India opening direct, public talks with the Taliban during your meetings, something India has rejected thus far?

Answer: It is for India to decide its role, but I do think engagement between India and all the key players in Afghanistan, not only in terms of the government but also in terms of political forces, society and the Afghan body politic, is appropriate given India's regional and



should open the door to negotiations for a political roadmap and a permanent comprehensive ceasefire. The territory of Afghanistan must not be used against the United States, our allies and, in fact, the world. So, peace for Afghanistan, and security for the world from Afghanistan, are our two goals, and I was encouraged by my meetings on this trip. International support for peace in Afghanistan is important and Indian support in particular was the focus of my mission [to Delhi].

Question: Is the focus on India's role just lip service? India is not at present involved in any of the regional formats that are currently discussing Afghanistan's future.

Answer: That's an excellent question, because this is a paradox, that on the one hand India has such a significant role when you look at development of Afghanistan and India has such a long history with the people of Afghanistan... But when it comes to international efforts, India does not yet have the role that it could. Part of that may have been a choice to pursue its role bilaterally, but I

global position. India is an important force in Afghanistan and it would be appropriate for that [India-Taliban] engagement to take place.

Question: Has India expressed a desire for a role beyond humanitarian assistance, economic and reconstruction, in terms of mediation, or more security assistance?

Answer: India has a key role in the development and it supported so many important projects there. We did discuss what kind of future role India might want to play. When it comes to the peace process, I can tell you India is considering a more active role; and we in the US are supportive of India's engagement in the international process.

Question: Specifically, could India help in the current impasse within the Afghan polity, in particular between President Ghani, and former CEO Dr. Abdullah?

Answer: India has good relations with several leaders in

Afghanistan and like the US, India supports the end of the political crisis in Kabul to bring about a more inclusive government. I am encouraged by the decision of the political leaders: President Ghani, Dr. Abdullah, [former] President Karzai, and other leaders to form an inclusive negotiating team. I found that India and the US are on the same wavelength with regard to the resolution of the internal political crisis and the establishment of an inclusive government.

Question: The US-Taliban deal is being seen in India as a deal for withdrawal, not a peace deal. There are concerns that this is not an Afghan-owned-and-led agreement, there is no ceasefire, no Taliban commitment to the constitution. In fact, the US seems to be putting the Taliban at par with the democratically elected government in Kabul. Your response?

Answer: The US -Taliban agreement is a necessary step

In speaking to the government, the Taliban, neighbours and international players to achieve peace.

Question: For India, it is the groups in Afghanistan that target India, which are backed by Pakistan that are a worry, and the US-Taliban agreement doesn't mention those.

Answer: Look, our strong position is that there shouldn't be [terror] sanctuaries on either side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and I believe that for peace to come to Afghanistan, there is a need for good relations amongst the neighbours and support for peace. I believe that the Pakistani leadership has supported the peace process, and thinks that the time has come for economic strategy, for trade and development and for Afghanistan to become a platform for regional cooperation and connectivity. We encourage and support those objectives. India and Afghanistan have historic ties, and I believe that dialogue between India and the Taliban is important, and



to transition to the Afghan-owned process. We have a specific commitment from the Taliban not to allow terrorism from territory they control, and should they join a future government that they will not allow Al-Qaeda and other terror groups to launch attacks against the US and its allies, and indeed the rest of the world. That's an important achievement. So, while we are not as far along as we or India would have liked, we don't see a better alternative to this process.

The war has gone on. The question is: without a political solution how do we get to a military solution and vice versa? So, it is necessary to have this first step. After all the US came to Afghanistan for this purpose, to ensure Taliban breaks from Al Qaeda and doesn't allow it and other groups to use Afghan soil to attack us. My aim on this trip is as much to ensure that the release of prisoners is sorted out. So, as I said, while we are not as far along as we or India would have liked, we don't see a better alternative to this process. And therefore we will persist,

it would be important that issues of concern like this [terrorism] are raised directly.

Question: Is the fact that India and Pakistan are not talking to each other, an impediment to the process in Afghanistan, and did you discuss that with Mr Jaishankar and Mr Doval?

Answer: If we are talking about reconciliation in Afghanistan, support from Pakistan, India and the international community is very important. For peace, there must be an agreement broadly accepted across Afghanistan, and both India and Pakistan have an important role to play in that. I also think both can benefit from peace in Afghanistan, in terms of security and economic development. We are focused on violence and war at present but should peace come to Afghanistan, it could actually help transform the region towards more cooperation and more connectivity for all the countries involved, and that will be good for India and Pakistan. ■

T

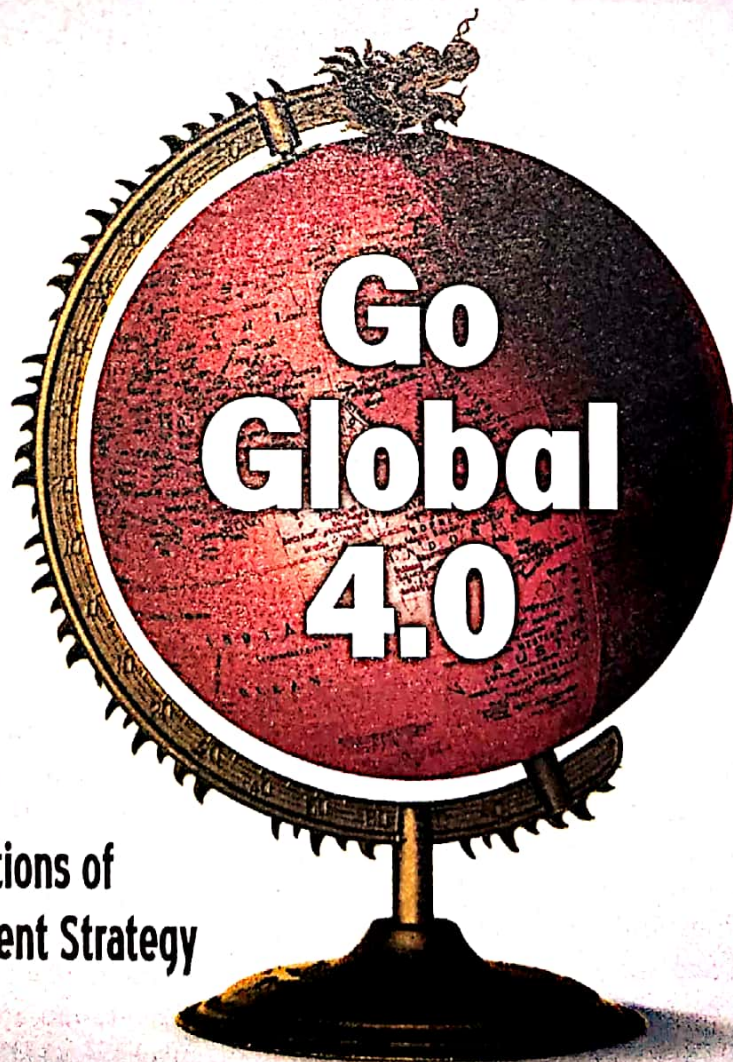
he Go Global strategy (or Go Out policy), which started in 1999, pushed and supported Chinese enterprises to become multinational companies. The policy was officially launched in 2001 to coincide with China's admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and Chinese private companies joined the policy in the same year. The Go Global strategy allowed the Chinese state to guide strategic companies, both state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private businesses, to secure resources, knowledge and access to offshore markets. The policy reached its peak under the Wen Jiabao and Hu Jintao (Hu-Wen) administration (2002-2012). The principal investments under the policy pertained to securing access to energy and metal natural resources. Such investments accounted for 70% of total outflows from China between 2005 and 2014. The other main beneficiaries of Chinese investment under the Go Global strategy were the automotive, technology and shipping sectors, and Africa was the region that received

the most of Chinese investment.

This early period of outward investment under the Hu-Wen administration is known as the 'Go Global era 1.0'. A later period that saw Chinese SOEs secure access to overseas markets in key areas, such as oil and gas, is referred to as the 'Go Global era 2.0'.

Under the Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang (Xi-Li) administration, Chinese investment moved towards a 'Go Global era 3.0', in which China directly invested in overseas markets, locating company assets and production abroad, and acquiring or merging foreign companies and infrastructure. Key to this period was the need to create an innovation-driven economy. Core to the 'Go Global era 3.0' was a strategic plan entitled 'Made in China 2025', whereby the government aimed to upgrade ten strategic industries, including robotics, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, car manufacturing, IT, and transportation. The logic behind 'Made in China 2025' was to overcome the middle-income trap by moving China's manufacturing sector up the value chain. By forcing companies to invest and move part of their production

The extraordinary economic performance of China between the onset of the reform era in the early 1980s and the global financial crisis was mainly driven by export-led economic growth model, which was supported by high productivity of labour-intensive manufactures, low wages, and export-stimulating policies. In 1999, China carved out its "Go Global" strategy which bade farewell to the Mao-era mindset of self-reliance. It exhorted Chinese firms to take advantage of booming world trade to invest in global markets. Under the Xi-Li leadership, "Go Global" strategy has evolved to reflect domestic goals: moving from an investment- to an innovation-driven economy. Led by two high-profile initiatives—Belt and Road and Capacity Cooperation—Go Global strategy has changed China's investment trends and patterns.



**New Directions of
China's Investment Strategy**

overseas, the Chinese state hoped to drive innovation in these companies—a skill they would need in order to compete and survive in international markets. Another key aspect of the 'Go Global era 3.0' is the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and creation of its two related but independent investment vehicles, the Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The scale of BRI investment is estimated to reach between \$1 trillion and \$8 trillion. The BRI will involve at least 70 countries directly across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Another 60 countries, including South Korea, have signed BRI agreements despite not being directly affected. The BRI will allow the Chinese state to directly support Chinese companies to gain a foothold in international markets. The BRI also creates Chinese-owned and -designed infrastructure networks, such as rail and telecommunications networks, allowing spill-over effects by offering Chinese private companies, which already contribute to



such networks in China, a comparative advantage across these BRI networks. This will lead to the final era of the strategy, the 'Go Global 4.0', which will see private Chinese enterprises as the main driver of overseas investment. This would enable them to raise private funds both inside

Go Global and Technological Transformation

Reducing technological gap with the developed world and transforming innovations into a driver of economic growth is China's strategic priority. On the one hand, its achieving is associated with the country's outward investment strategy (enhanced direct investments into high-tech industries and enterprises abroad). On the other hand, it is encouraged by domestic policies. The country's strategy of technological development bases on several documents: The National Outline for Medium- and Long-term Science and Technology Development Programme (2006–2020); Five-year Science and Technology Development Plan; 'Internet+' strategy and the 'Made in China 2025' roadmap. The main instruments contributing to technological transformation are:

- the authorities' heavy investments in technologies;
- rising governmental expenditures on research and development at the level of higher education system and research institutes;
- stimulation of innovation development through free trade zones; and
- intensive development of a wide net of international bilateral and multilateral agreements on science and technology.

China's successful innovation-stimulating policy resulted in substantial changes in directions and sectoral structure of technological flows. 1. China used to be blamed for cloning US technologies and business models ('Copy-to-China' strategy). In recent years, the trend has reversed. Some experts stress an evolution from 'Copy-to-China' to 'Copy-from-China', when Western companies are 'looking to China for aspiration, especially in Internet-related areas. Thus, China transforms gradually from a recipient of foreign technological ideas into a driver of technological innovations. 2. 'Chinese industries are not only getting closer to the technological frontier in conventional areas such as electronics, machinery, automobiles, high-speed railways and aviation, but also driving technological innovations in emerging areas. 3. Chinese enterprises tend to be rather successful in 'creation of new combinations of component technologies'. As China for decades used to be a global 'assembly manufactory' and the core element of global value-added chains, different research and development (R&D) activities base inside the country, providing opportunities for new technological combinations. 4. China is moving from medium-level technological track to a high-tech one. The country has already reached maturity in machinery and electronics, as well as infrastructure construction and logistic chains. At the same time, it starts encouraging high-tech sector development, such as smart and clean energy systems, new energy vehicles, automation and robotics, advanced medical equipment, biotechnologies, etc. The sectoral priorities are closely connected with contemporary trends on the advanced markets, as well as potential challenges and risks to China's long-term sustainable development. The three main fields of innovation development can be outlined:

- **Agricultural technologies**—as the problems of ensuring food security become more acute. Positive population growth and rapid middle class growth increase demand for agricultural products. At the same time, relatively lower productivity of agricultural workforce, together with rapid urbanization and gradual degradation of agricultural land, lower agricultural supply.
- **Energy**—mainly new and renewable sources of energy (solar, wind, biomass and nuclear fusion), advanced nuclear energy. China remains one of the largest energy consumers amid the increasing scarcity of traditional energy sources. The contemporary policy aims at establishing a clean, low-carbon, safe and efficient modern energy system for sustainable growth, and achieving the goal of non-fossil energy accounting for 15% of primary energy consumption by 2020 is officially declared in the 13th Five-Year Plan.
- **Cyberspace**—including next generation information and telecommunication technologies, big data and supercomputers, robotics and e-commerce, which have both economic and political motives. Besides the expected sufficient returns due to excessive demand on these types of technologies and services both on domestic and external markets, they become a strategic instrument for strengthening China's positions in the system of international relations. The 'international status' notion has been gradually changing, now it is determined not just by military or economic power but by countries' 'power of opinion', their positioning in information and digital space.

China and on the international market. These companies would be less guided by the Chinese state and would be reactive to economic market drivers.

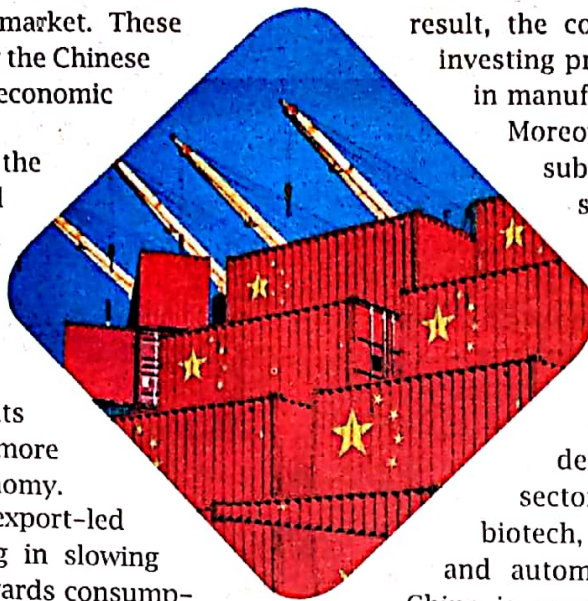
'Go Global eras' 3.0 and 4.0 under the Xi-Li administration have created new directions of outward investment strategy which allows China to push its economy further up the value chain. Thus, China hopes to increase the overall wealth of its workers, helping to create a more balanced consumption-driven economy. New challenges, e.g. exhaustion of export-led economic growth model, resulting in slowing pace of economic growth, shift towards consumption-led growth, rapid growth of capital-intensive sectors, replacement of labour-intensive industries, as well as China's strategic positioning as a 'science and technology superpower', predetermine recent trends in the country's foreign investment strategy. Despite a 17% decline of outward direct investments (ODI) in 2018 (caused by policies discouraging capital outflows, the rising sanction tensions, and increased screening of inward investment in North America and Europe), China is still the world's third-largest investor behind the United States and Japan. Following contemporary challenges and its strategic priorities, China's outward investment policy has begun to demonstrate signs of change.

1. Changes in forms of investments

Chinese corporations shift from being minority stakeholders looking for profit to acquiring foreign companies, to increasing their share in various projects, participating in decision-making, and in using infrastructure facilities to meet their own strategic priorities. In recent years, China's corporations have become among the largest initiators of mega-deals in the form of mergers and acquisitions (the most recent cases are Italy's Pirelli, Switzerland's Syngenta, Spanish energy company Repsol's offshore business, etc.).

2. Changes in sectoral destinations

Income-stimulating policies (monetary easing and fiscal expansion) and rapid growth in incomes and wages deprive China of its traditional comparative advantages. As a



result, the country is no longer interested in investing primarily in commodities but rather in manufacturing and high-tech industries. Moreover, the recent years have seen substantial increase in ODI to service sectors and participation in large infrastructure projects. In 2018, amid rising concerns about China's investment expansion in recipient countries, investments in transport, infrastructure and real estate declined. At the same time, such sectors as financial services, health and biotech, consumer products and services, and automotive saw the biggest increases. China is expanding investments into relatively more hi-tech projects, including alternative energy, biotechnologies, etc. The number of acquisitions of hi-tech companies and manufacturing companies is also on the rise. State-supported investments in sensitive technologies and critical infrastructure have risen significantly.

3. Changes in motivation

Resource-seeking and efficiency-seeking motives of outward investments give place to strategic asset-seeking purposes. When making investment decisions, Chinese companies are driven by the motive to get access to technology, strategic facilities, knowledge, or competences that are not inside the firm, as well as to expand the network of business contacts and improve business reputation. Market-seeking motivation seems to be a second-important type, its contentment has been changing.

As a percentage of state-owned or state-supported enterprises is high, their outward investment policy is driven, to a relatively lesser extent, by profit-maximizing factors but rather by strategic economic and political ones. Instead of being motivated by the will of avoiding transportation and trade costs (or by tariff jumping motives), China tends to consider foreign markets more as destination for its labour force, because of rising social tensions inside the country. Moreover, it is becoming important to have physical presence on the market to prevent competitors from its occupation. ■



Once upon a time Chinese statecraft was discreet and enigmatic. Henry Kissinger, the former US secretary of state, wrote in his seminal study *Diplomacy* that "Beijing's diplomacy was so subtle and indirect that it largely went over our heads in Washington." Governments in the West employed Sinologists to interpret the opaque signals emanating from China's politburo. Under its former leader, Deng Xiaoping, the country's declared strategy was to "hide its ability and bide its time". Well, not any more. Under Xi Jinping, China's diplomats have abandoned that policy for an aggressive approach being aptly called "Wolf Warrior" diplomacy, with envoys taking to Twitter to respond bluntly to any accusation made against China and even threatening trade war against governments that criticize China. This has been styled after the blockbuster success of the patriotic, Rambo-style film *Wolf Warrior 2* of mid-2017. The slogan of the film, taken from a Han dynasty saying, is: "Whoever offends China will be punished, no matter how far they are."



WOLF WARRIOR DIPLOMACY

In *Wolf Warrior 2*, the 2017 Chinese blockbuster that became the country's highest-grossing film of all time, a former special ops soldier in Africa defeats Western mercenaries, rescues trapped factory workers, and protects the vaccine for the Ebola-like "Lamanla" virus that a Chinese doctor discovered. With Hollywood-style explosions, gunfights, and hand-to-hand combat, the film energized Chinese moviegoers as it depicted their country as an unstoppable altruistic superpower rather than the victim of a

century of humiliation. Leng Feng, the titular *Wolf Warrior*, saves the lives of defenceless Africans, beats to death the ruthless American mercenary, and gets the girl by the end of the two hours. Its tag line was: "Anyone who offends China will be killed, no matter how far the target is." At the end of the film, the red cover of a Chinese passport is displayed, accompanied by the message: "Citizens of the PRC: When you encounter danger in a foreign land, do not give up! Please remember, at your back stands a strong motherland." Now, this wolf-warrior mentality has moved from the big

"We never pick a fight or bully others. But we have principles and guts. We will push back against any deliberate insult, resolutely defend our national honour and dignity, and we will refute all groundless slander with facts."

— Wang Yi,
Foreign Minister of China

screen to real life. China has now dispatched an increasingly vocal cadre of diplomats out into the world of social media to take on all comers with, at times, an eye-blinking frankness. Their aim is to defend China's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and challenge those who question Beijing's version of events.

We have seen China's international messaging changing rapidly during the recent years. At the party to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Chinese Foreign Ministry last year, Foreign Minister Wang Yi urged the country's envoys

to adopt a "fighting spirit" in the face of international challenges. Although Twitter and Facebook are banned in China, diplomats quickly acquired accounts and followers, and began to use them to hammer the countries where they were posted. As China faces attacks over its alleged role in the spread of the coronavirus, these diplomats have taken an increasingly strident tone against, and are

giving more robust diplomatic response to, countries critical of China especially the United States, Australia, and a few other countries. These 'wolf warriors' are lashing out at European countries and even traditional allies. For example, when an unnamed Venezuelan official

INTERNATIONAL

Mask Diplomacy

In addition to the hard-line wolf-warrior diplomacy, China is also deploying a softer mask diplomacy. Around the world, China has jumped in to donate masks, ventilators, medical supplies, and even medical personnel, in some cases, to countries struggling to fight the coronavirus, especially in Europe and Africa. Chinese propaganda has focused on an Air China plane touching down at Ghana's airport with 37 tons of supplies in boxes with the "China Aid" logo. All the supplies are going to African countries.

China has also come to the aid of Serbia, where President Aleksandar Vučić slammed Europe for its lack of assistance when the country announced a state of emergency in March. Planes full of equipment touched down in Belgrade, and six medical experts coordinated the country's coronavirus policy, recommending the government quarantine patients in large field hospitals, according to The Guardian. In gratitude, Vučić kissed a Chinese flag while a pro-government tabloid paid for billboards that read, "Thank you, Brother Xi."

China's "mask diplomacy" also spurred a dramatic change of tone from Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis. Before the pandemic, he had called for the removal of the Chinese ambassador after a threatening letter from the embassy over a Czech lawmaker's planned visit to Taiwan.

But as Covid-19 infections spread, Babis raced to the airport to personally greet a planeload of medical supplies from China, and publicly thanked the ambassador he had wanted withdrawn.

referred to the coronavirus as the "Wuhan" or "Chinese" virus. Chinese diplomats tweeted they should "put on a face mask and shut up." This suggests that China is positioning itself as an aggressor, willing to push back when adversaries, especially in the United States, criticize it. Such strong actions also act as a warning to other countries who may consider taking actions China disapproves of.

This is what is being dubbed as "wolf-warrior diplomacy". And, this new approach seems to enjoy some popularity inside China and reinforces a presumed transition of Chinese diplomacy from being conservative, passive, low-key to assertive, proactive and high-profile. Global Times, a daily tabloid newspaper under the auspices of the Chinese Communist Party's People's Daily newspaper, recently wrote: "The days when China can be put in a submissive position are long gone. China's rising status in the world requires it to safeguard its national interests in an unequivocal way."

Wolf-warrior diplomacy, named after the popular movies, describes how Chinese diplomats are launching an offensive to defend China's national interests in a high-handed and often confrontational way. For example,

China's foreign ministry spokespersons Hua Chunying and Zhao Lijian have taken to Twitter to hit back against external criticism of China's handling of the coronavirus outbreak and poor quality of exported Chinese medical equipment. Zhao said in a tweet on 20 March that "if someone claims that China's exports are toxic, then stop wearing China-made masks and protective gowns."

Why is China resorting to wolf-warrior diplomacy? How does it affect the current global combat against Covid-19 and China's relations with other countries? Has the aggressive style become the norm of Chinese diplomacy? Here are the reasons that effectively answer these questions:

Soaring nationalism

First, this change in China's diplomatic approach did not occur all of a sudden. Since 2010 when China's GDP overtook Japan's to be the world's second largest, the Chinese have become more proud and confident, and China's foreign policy has become more assertive, gradually departing from, but not completely abandoning, former leader Deng Xiaoping's *taoguang yanghui* (keeping a low profile) dictum. As the Communist Party continues to promote "four confidences"—confidence in our chosen path, confidence in our political system, confidence in our guiding theories, and confidence in our culture—nationalism has been on the rise among the Chinese public. Wolf-warrior diplomacy is an extension and reflection of soaring nationalism at home.

In recent years, President Xi Jinping has advocated "a fighting spirit" on several occasions, whether speaking to PLA soldiers or to party officials at the Central Party School. This *gung-ho* call has apparently raised the morale of Chinese officials and diplomats and has encouraged a more assertive diplomatic style.

Wolf-warrior diplomacy is evidenced not only in combative words but also in aggressive actions. For example, in early April, a Chinese Coast Guard ship allegedly sank a Vietnamese fishing trawler near the controversial Paracel Islands. When Vietnam protested, the Chinese foreign ministry responded by saying Vietnam's claims of the controversial area are "illegal". Then on 19 April, Chinese Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Civil Affairs jointly announced





"foreign missions," requiring them to register their personnel and property with the US government and cutting the number of Chinese nationals working at the five media outlets. In retaliation, the Chinese Foreign Ministry expelled more American journalists. In view of the foreign ministry spokesman Zhao, his claim that the coronavirus might have been brought to Wuhan by the US military athletes was a response to US politicians' calling it "Chinese virus". Hawks in the US government, notably Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, have continued to use the derogatory term "Wuhan virus" in violation of the World Health Organisation guidelines.

Third, just as Chinese society has become more diverse, Chinese diplomats are not monolithic. There is no consensus within the Chinese foreign policy establishment on whether confrontational diplomacy is desirable for China now, and not all Chinese diplomats are wolf warriors.

Traditional-minded Chinese diplomats, including the long-serving ambassador to Washington, Cui Tiankai, have sought to tamp down the combative impulse among some Chinese diplomats and dismissed Zhao's conspiracy theory about the US military as "crazy". Another veteran diplomat, former vice foreign minister, Fu Ying, said Chinese diplomats should uphold "the spirit of humility and tolerance, and adhere to communication, learning, and openness" in a recent article.

Wolf diplomacy soon to fizzle out?

Diplomacy cannot and should not be hijacked by populism and nationalism at home. Whether wolf-warrior diplomacy represents the culmination of the transition of Chinese diplomacy to a combative and hawkish style is too early to tell. Diplomacy is not the priority of Chinese leaders, whose focus is inevitably on daunting domestic challenges. As China faces growing external criticisms and demands for reparations over the coronavirus, it is not inconceivable that Chinese leaders will soon rein in the confrontational-style diplomacy in order to create an environment conducive to domestic reconstruction. In other words, with internal and external challenges, wolf-warrior diplomacy may not last long.

In fact, this sort of diplomacy is already hurting China's foreign policy since it has generated some pushback against China, such as Australia's calls for an independent probe into the origins of the coronavirus. China's soft power is weak globally; a belligerent approach will further damage China's global image. According to the latest polls released by Pew on 21 April 2020, 66% of Americans surveyed during 3-29 March say they have an unfavourable view of China, the most negative rating for the country since Pew began asking the question in 2005, and up nearly 20 percentage points since the start of the Trump administration. Confidence level in President Xi

the naming of 80 islands, reefs, seamounts, shoals and ridges in the South China Sea (SCS), triggering angry protests from other claimants of the (SCS). The last time China named islands and other geographical features in the (SCS) was in 1983.

Telling the China story

Second, as China becomes more powerful, some of its neighbours and Western countries especially the US increasingly view its development as a threat to their national interests. These countries are generally unprepared or unwilling to accept China's rise. Western narratives about China's rise are overwhelmingly negative. Many Chinese believe that Western media's portrayal of China is highly biased, often with ideological and racist tinges. The wolf-warrior diplomacy is part of the Chinese government's endeavour to "tell the China story" to counter Western narratives. The latest diplomatic offensive is also part of the official effort to project China as a great power leading the global fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

China's image has suffered during the Covid-19 crisis due to its bungled handling of the outbreak at the early stage. Many countries blame China for initially covering up the human-to-human transmission of the virus and for not sharing complete information with the international community. Some have even sued China in their courts. There has been a reported surge of cases of sinophobia or anti-Chinese and anti-Asian racism in some countries.

From China's perspective, the current wolf-warrior diplomacy is a direct response to "unfair" approaches of other countries, especially the US, toward China and the Chinese people. For example, earlier this year, the US and China were engaged in a race to expel journalists, which started with the publication of an op-ed titled "China is the Real Sick Man of Asia" by The Wall Street Journal. When the WSJ refused to apologise, China expelled three of its journalists. Shortly afterwards, the US State Department declared five Chinese news media to be

INTERNATIONAL

Three Wolf Warriors

A recent BBC report took Foreign Ministry spokesperson and former Minister-Counsellor of Chinese Embassy in Pakistan Zhao Lijian, Chinese Embassy in India Counselor Ji Rong and Minister Ma Hui from the Chinese Embassy in the UK, who had publicly slammed US accusations against China over the pandemic, as typical "Wolf Warrior" diplomats.

1. Zhao Lijian

He is a young foreign affairs spokesperson is the quintessential "wolf warrior" with over 600,000 followers on Twitter who knows how to exploit his audience. When he returned from a posting to Pakistan last year, Reuters reported that "a group of young admirers" at the Foreign Ministry cheered him. He had catapulted into global attention by labelling the US as racist and in a Twitter spat, telling former National Security Advisor Susan Rice she was "a disgrace" and "shockingly ignorant." In January, Zhao was promoted to a Foreign Ministry spokesman, highlighting that this was the path to diplomatic success. In this new role, Zhao has tweeted to his followers that US soldiers brought Covid-19 to Wuhan when competing in the 2019 Military World Games.

2. Ji Rong

A spokesperson in the Chinese embassy in India, Rong often lectures Indian media to course-correct and adhere to the One-China principle. She even goes beyond the scope of diplomatic ambit and calls India's complaints "ridiculous" and "eye-ball catching nonsense".

3. Ma Hui

In the United Kingdom, China's "wolf warrior" is Ma Hui who is the number-3 at the Chinese embassy in London. Ironically, his twitter ID includes the word "warhorse". Ma Hui lives up to this self-given title. He once described US leaders as despicable and wanted all of China to fight back their so-called stupidity.

dropped to 22%, the lowest since the question was asked in 2014.

Finally, diplomacy is supposed to help solve problems and bring nations together, not push them apart. It is truly unfortunate that China and the US are engaged in a diplomatic tussle and blame each other when they should be working together. It's imperative that they play down their differences and focus on containing the coronavirus now.

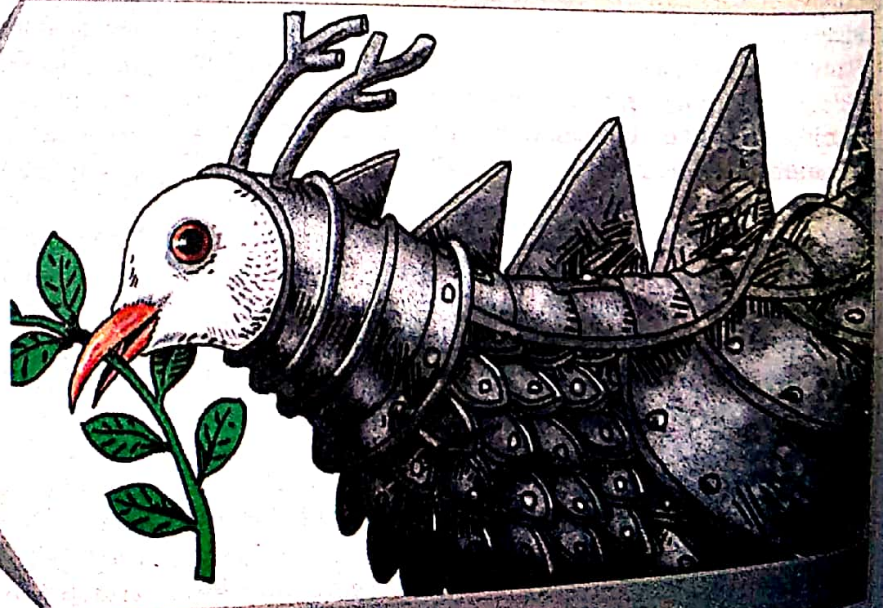
As a nation proud of its glorious ancient civilisation, China should remain humble and magnanimous. Many analysts believe that it should be courageous enough to admit its botched handling of the coronavirus at the outset and hold relevant officials accountable. The Chinese government should improve the mechanism that encourages, not impedes, local officials to report such public health alerts, instantly and effectively.

Due to political, ideological and cultural differences, Western suspicions about the Chinese government and anxiety about China's rise will not disappear any time soon, and the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated such distrust and apprehensions. A more powerful China should be more confident and be receptive to constructive criticism. Striking a balance between firmly defending its national interests and enhancing its soft

power is a great challenge in Chinese diplomacy today.

Conclusion

Senior Chinese diplomats have called for more "Wolf Warriors" to defend the country abroad despite warnings that this combative approach was likely to alienate the rest of the world. The whole discussion can be summed up in the words of Liu Xiaoming, China's ambassador to Britain who recently said: "Some people said China now has many Wolf Warriors, the reason is that there are many 'wolves' out there in the world now. If there are 'wolves', we must have 'Wolf Warriors' to fight. We encourage diplomats at all levels to actively fight. Where there is a 'wolf', we need to fight back actively to protect national dignity and interests." ■



Historically, India-China ties date back to the 1950s. Both countries started their diplomatic relations in a cordial atmosphere. After the defeat of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) government on October 1, 1949, by Mao Zedong-led communist forces, India was the first non-communist Asian country that recognized Democratic Republic of China (DRC) and established diplomatic relations with it. But soon, the flowering relations withered and faded into an atmosphere of hostility on account of various factors like Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950; the 1959 correspondence between DRC premier and his Indian counterpart Jawaharlal Nehru in which China refused to accept McMahon Line (de-facto demarcation line between India and China) as the international border; and India's provocative action of offering asylum to Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama and thousands of his followers in 1959. These politico-diplomatic developments caused the outbreak of brief but bloody war between India and China in 1962. The war proved humiliation for India and Chinese forces were able to occupy 48 kilometres of Indian territory in Assam plains and gained access to strategic points in Ladakh. Since then, this bilateral relationship is characterized by border disputes at multiple points along the whole length of 4,056 km Sino-Indian border. The ongoing face-off between India and China has also its roots, to a considerable extent, in the decades-old territorial dispute along the Line of Actual Control—the demarcation line that divides Indian-controlled territories from Chinese-controlled territories of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.



The Line of Actual Control (LAC) remained an informal ceasefire line till 1993 when both India and China accepted it as de-facto border line. India considers

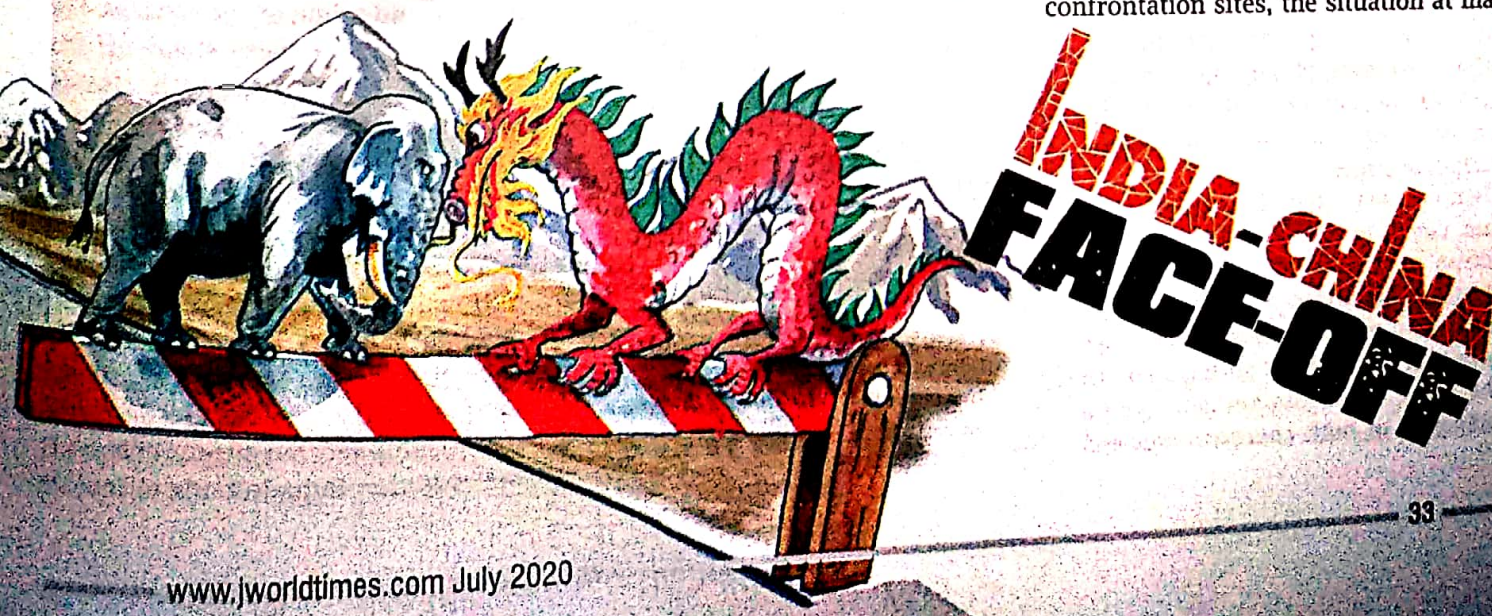
LAC 3438 km long whereas China asserts that its length is 2000 km. This line traverses the extremely difficult mountainous terrain and is divided into three sectors: Eastern, Middle and Western. The Eastern sector spans Indian-controlled Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim; demarcation here corresponds to the 1914 McMahon Line. There are minor disagreements here between India and China. The Middle sector is also least controversial as both countries have exchanged maps of the straddling territories. The most disputed and hotly-contested sector is the Western one where both countries have major disagreements.

These three sectors of LAC have distinctive and peculiar legal features. As far as the state policy regarding these sectors of LAC is concerned, both sides follow different approaches: China has maintained consistent policy to assert its sovereignty all along the LAC whereas Indian position is surprisingly contradictory in all three sectors. As far as the claims of both countries are concerned, the LAC corresponds to China's territorial claims in the Western and the Middle sector, but in Eastern sector, it considers entire Arunachal Pradesh and southern Tibet its own territories. India maintains that LAC does not mirror its territorial claims. In the Western sector, it claims entire Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Aksai Chin; in Middle sector, it locks horns with Nepal

over Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura disputed territories, and in the Eastern sector, it does not claim any territory at all as LAC corresponds the McMahon Line which is accepted by India, but rejected by China as international border.

The recent flare-up between two nuclear-armed countries, which spend \$300 billion annually, started in early May when thousands of People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops suddenly descended upon Indian-occupied territories in Western and Eastern Sector of LAC and stunned Indian political and military strategists. Situation is particularly tense in the Western sector where Chinese troops engaged in fist fight and scuffling with Indian troops and took physical control of nearly 60 km² in Gulwan valley (northern Ladakh), Hot Springs and Pongong Lake (eastern Ladakh). In addition to reported stand-off at above-mentioned three points, there are reports that Indian and Chinese came to blows on Sikkim (eastern sector of LAC) as well. As Lt. Gen (retd) HS Panag, who remained General Officer Commanding of Indian army in Northern and Central Command, in an article published in The Print on 28th of May, noted: "[J]ust like previous skirmishes of 1962, 1965 and 1999, PLA again surprised India both tactically and strategically. The manner in which we had to rush reinforcements from other sectors gives a clear indication that we were surprised."

At the time of penning this article, two rounds of dialogue between both countries at military level have failed as negotiations remained inconclusive. Although there are some signs of slight pull-back of troops in three out of four confrontation sites, the situation at main



face-off site, i.e. Pangong Lake, remains tense where China has effectively blocked all Indian patrols since early May. It has now become evident that complete withdrawal of Chinese troops is highly unlikely as it has gained tactical advantage and will be negotiating with India from a position of strength in future rounds of negotiations.

The rapid escalation of the stand-off warrants unearthing of underlying strategic and political factors that pushed China to act aggressively despite that it is facing the Covid-19-caused serious medico-economic challenges. The reasons have been discussed in the following paragraphs:

Strategically, Ladakh, the theatre of active confrontation, is the only territory where Pak Army can collaborate with PLA to threaten Indian positions at Siachen Glacier, the highest battleground on Earth. The supply line for Indian troops stationed in Siachen is extremely tenuous due to vulnerable communication in this region. Given these factors, India started building infrastructure to strengthen its communication lines. The construction of a road in Galwan river valley is the major plank of India's strategic plan. China opposes the move as the Galwan valley provides access to China-controlled Aksai Chin territory where Tibet-Xinjiang NH-219, a strategically-located national highway, passes. Any infrastructural improvement in Indian-controlled Galwan valley is set to threaten crucially-important NH-219. To neutralize this potential threat, PLA took physical control of the 3-5 km area of this valley. In the second round of military-to-military dialogue, which was held on June 10, 2020, PLA interlocutors flatly refused to withdraw troops from Galwan valley; instead they claimed sovereignty over the entire valley. As per Indian defence analysts, PLA has now gained strategic advantage and effectively rendered the strategic road useless for Indian army.

Chenmo river valley is another area that can give Indian military direct access to Aksai Chin. Owing to the strategic significance of this valley, India has maintained a check post here that is called Hot Springs. This is the third confrontation site where militaries of both countries engaged

in physical scuffling and troops have dug in and enacted tents and mobilized military assets. Pangong Lake is another site of intense standoff. On its northern bank, China has dug up its troops and they maintain very active presence here. There is a pass nearby, named as Anna La, in Indian possession which can give direct access to Indian troops to get behind Chinese lines of defence. Obviously, China can ill-afford this threat. This area also has a number of interlocking spurs, called fingers. India has physical control up to finger 4 and patrols up to 8. Contrary to this, China has established check post on finger 8 and claims the area down to finger 2.

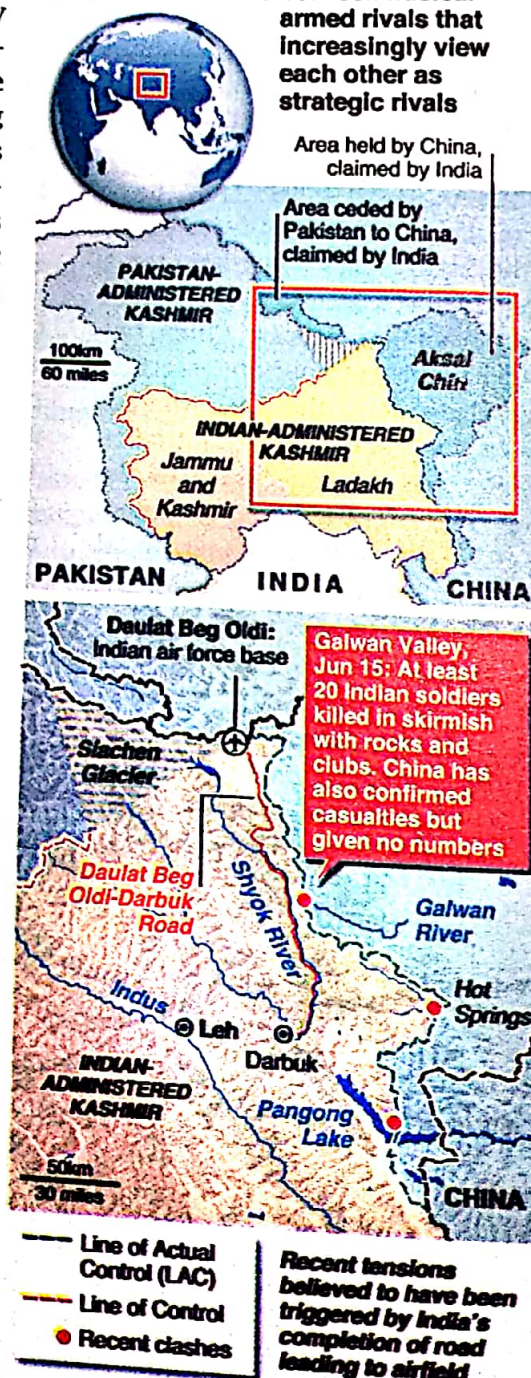
During the Kargil war, China built a road down to finger 5, where the third face-off is taking place. Here again, PLA negotiators, while terming stone-pelting by PLA troops as against the spirit, refused to accommodate Indian territorial concerns. In fine, the strategic aims of China behind this confrontation are to save both Aksai Chin and NH-219 from any threat, however remote it is.

Politically, China has telegraphed its strength across the world that it can fight at multiple fronts. After containing the medico-economic impacts of Covid-19 to lowest possible level, China has embarked on an aggressive foreign policy to send unambiguous warnings that it can address a number of national security threats simultaneously. This move has come at a time when China has established two administrative districts in South China Sea to bolster its claims of territorial sovereignty, announced plans to impose national security laws in Hong Kong to suppress year-long sustained pro-democracy riot-cum-protests and locked horns with US over trade dispute and origin of coronavirus. The ongoing Indo-Chinese stand-off fits right in the deftly-orchestrated broader Chinese foreign policy.

Though China is the largest trading partner of India and both countries have maintained largely peaceful ties since 2002, the emergence of Hindu nationalist party BJP and strengthened parliamentary position of Hindu supremacist, Narendra Modi, in the wake of 2019 general election, has made China very suspicious of India. It believes that India intends to restore

India-China tensions rise in Himalayas

The fiercest border clash between India and China in over 40 years left 20 Indian soldiers dead and worsened tensions between nuclear-armed rivals that increasingly view each other as strategic rivals



the pre-1950 order and it looks at the resuscitated development of border infrastructure as the demonstration of Indian expansionist and hegemonic designs. US-India fast-deepening strategic partnership to contain China's right to power, presence of Tibetan government-in-exile in Himachal Pradesh and, most importantly, India's unilateral abrogation of special status of Muslim-majority state of Jammu and Kashmir have further added to the complexity of India-China relations. This illegitimate annexation move by India on August 5, 2019, which resulted into bifurcation of the state into two union territories—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh—also had implications for Chinese territorial and economic interests in the perspective of Ladakh and CPEC. The post-August 05 aggressive stance of India's civilian and military leadership regarding Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan rang alarm bells in China over physical security of CPEC-associated projects. In this backdrop, it is easy to understand why recent flexing of PLA's muscles was sanctioned by President Xi Jinping's most trusted lieutenant, General Xu, who is responsible for strengthening the interoperability between the PLA and Pakistan military through a series of joint exercises named as Shaheen.

Now, with the complete physical control of Galwan River valley, which offers access to Sub Sector North and ultimately to east Siachen, China is able to start a localized two-front war against India in case of any eventually—the Pak army on the west and PLA on the east. This strategic advantage will help both Pakistan and China make CPEC more secured, and Indian hold on Kashmir tenuous and overstretched.

The stand-off is set to linger for a considerable time. Hindu nationalist RSS-BJP dispensation in India can ill-afford shattering the hard-won image of invincible Modi. Both sides will cling uncompromisingly to their stances, thereby making resolution of issue quite intractable in the near future. Now the most pertinent question that must trigger the institutional debate is what sorts of regional and global implications the ongoing face-off will have and what strategic directions our foreign policy should head so as to capitalize on this opportunity to secure our strategic, political and diplomatic objectives.

The first and immediate impact is further addition of complexity to India-China ties. China has long seen the growing Indo-US alignment as the continuation of the US cold war-era strategy of encirclement and containment of Soviet Union. The mediation offered by President Donald Trump, though immediately rejected by both countries, is set to further embitter the Sino-US relations, in addition to creating further divergence between India and China on

various regional affairs like Afghanistan peace process, Kashmir dispute and CPEC. The increased rivalry between India and China is bound to sharpen the geostrategic realignment in the Asia-Pacific regions as well. The divergence in Indo-China relations provides strategic opportunity for Pakistan to secure its national interests. With the active involvement of China, Kashmir has effectively become a trilateral dispute, thereby making it easy for Pakistan to internationalize it for global audience. This aspect is particularly worth considering because India is all set to become the non-permanent member of UNSC from next year, and obviously, the active participation of India in the decision-making process of the world's highest executive authority bodes ill for Pakistan. But now when China itself is involved with India over territorial claims, it will become comparatively easy for Pakistan to leverage China's diplomatic and economic clout to further its cause at the world's highest political platform. Another aspect of the ongoing conflict is that it provides fodder for Pakistan to substantiate its stance that RSS-BJP Hindu supremacist

regime is pursuing Hindutva's long-cherished dream of Akhand Bharat. Succinctly, Pakistan is bound to secure its goals through increasingly hostile Indo-China ties.

Regional conflict and instrumentalization of war as tool of securing national interests serve no one. Instability and lack of connectivity hinder the materialization of untapped potential of our region, but it has become evidently clear that

international community-led appeasement policies regarding Indian

expansionist designs are bound to create serious security threats. The increasingly aggressive policy of China is directly connected with Hindutva expansionist agenda. Some observers and diplomats of Pakistan Foreign Office have hinted that China may have linked the de-escalation with the condition of Indian commitment of restoring pre-5th August status of IOJK. Though these are just speculations, the scale and sophistication of PLA's offensive mobilization do indicate the long-term strategic objectives that China intends to secure through this move. Indian hegemonic designs need bulwark, since Pakistan cannot counter them effectively out of diplomatic and economic constraints, China is well-equipped to contain the nationalistic aspirations of RSS-BJP regime supported by underlying fascist ideology of alt-right and ultra-extremist constituencies of Indian society. China has shattered the myth of incredible India. ■

The writer is a graduate of the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. He writes on national and international affairs.



The slide of the United States into illiberalism may well have begun on June 1, 2020. Remember the date. It may well signal the beginning of the end of the American experiment.

The president of the United States stood in the Rose Garden of the White House on that day, railed against weak governors and mayors who were not doing enough, in his mind, to control the unrest and the rioters in their cities, and threatened to deploy the US military against American citizens. It was a stunning moment. But, in particular, it was notable for three important reasons.

First, Donald Trump expressed only the barest of condolences at the murder of George Floyd, but he also said nothing about the fundamental and underlying reasons for the unrest: systemic racism and inequality, a historic absence of respect, and a denial of justice. All of these factors are centuries old and deeply engrained in an American society that systematically delivers white privilege at the expense of people of colour.

Yes, he mentioned George Floyd, but he did not touch on long-standing societal problems at all. He sees the crisis as a black problem—not as something to be addressed by creating the basis and impetus for a move toward social justice, but as an opportunity to use force to portray himself as a “law and order” president. The reasons were irrelevant to the opportunity. Remember the supposed

Gen. John Allen, the former commander of the Nato International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US forces in Afghanistan, recently penned a scathing essay published online by Foreign Policy magazine on June 03. In this essay, he has termed President Trump's threats to use the US military on protesters as “the beginning of the end of the American experiment.” Allen warned that Trump's ongoing threats to send US military troops into states whose governors do not sufficiently “dominate” the protests should be chilling to all Americans.

Following is the text of the essay:

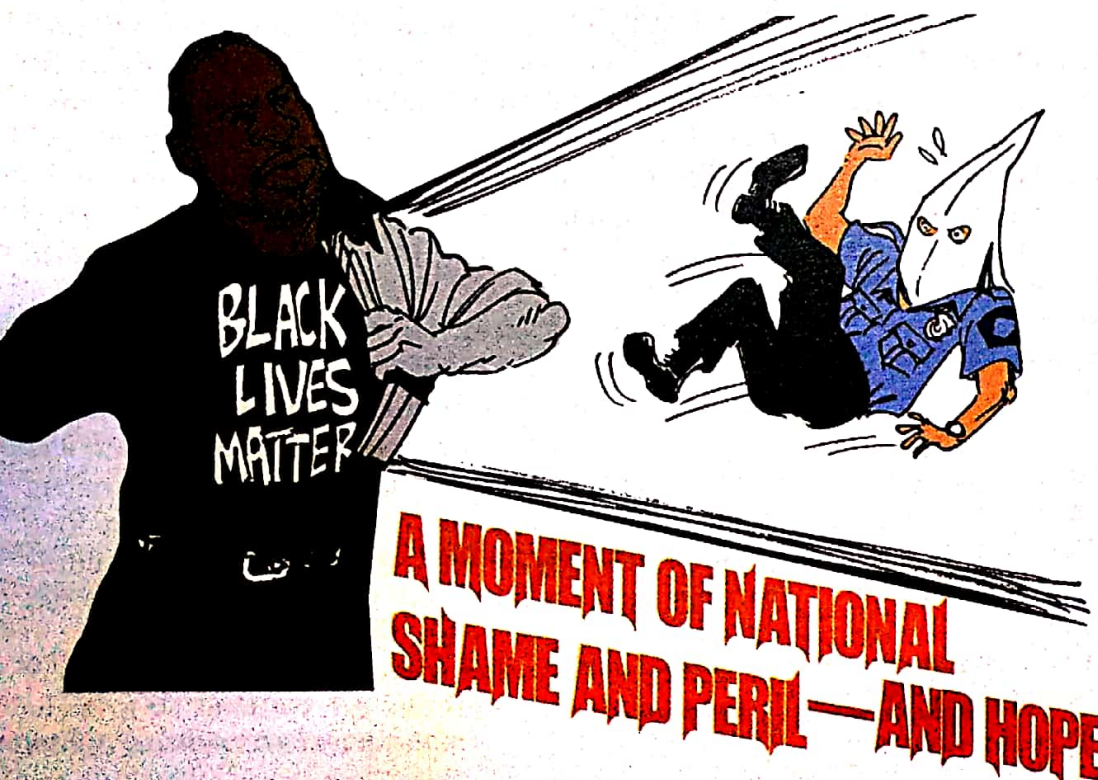
John Allen
invasion of the southern border and his deployment of federal troops ahead of the 2018 mid-term elections? The president's failure to understand the reality of the problem was on full display when he attempted to explain that his supporters, the so-called Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement, “love African-American people. They love black people. MAGA loves the black people.” Evidently his movement, MAGA, is a coherent thing, and it's white, which leads to the next point about his speech.

Second, Trump was clear; he views those engaged in the unrest and criminal acts in these riots as

terrorists, an enemy. He said so, ostensibly as justification to deploy the US military to apply federal force—his “personal” force—against the riots. Indeed, the Secretary of Defense used the military term “battlespace” to describe American cities.

While there may be some very accomplished criminals on both sides of the riots, the truth is that they are minuscule in numbers. The vast majority of the people protesting in the streets are justifiably furious at the murder of George Floyd, but they're even angrier over pervasive injustice, mass incarceration, frequent false arrests, and an institutionalized devaluation of black lives and property. And yes, as this anger has spilled over, violence and criminality have ensued. But as much as the president would like them to be—indeed, needs them to be—terrorists, that is not what

these people are. The president and members of his administration seem bent on ensuring that the so-called antifa—or anti-fascist—movement is fully on display as a principal reason for the violence. To deal with antifa, the president even tweeted that he intended to designate the group a terrorist organization—never mind that he has no authority to designate any domestic movement as such. Those of us who've looked closely at homegrown violent extremism do, in fact, agree that a domestic terrorism statute should exist. And were such a statute to come into being, the



obvious targets for designation as domestic terrorists are, first and foremost, violent white supremacist groups and individuals who provide material assistance to these groups. And even if antifa is found to fit the statute as well, let me be clear: White supremacists have murdered, lynched, tortured, terrorized, oppressed, and discriminated against black Americans from the beginning of the idea of America. They have killed black Americans by the thousands, often in the most horrific ways imaginable. Far more damage to the United States has come from these terrorists—fascists, Klansmen, and neo-Nazis, all feeling newly empowered today—than those who have opposed them.

Finally, the governors have sufficient law-enforcement capacity—and, if necessary, the combat power of the National Guard—to handle their respective crises. If not, they can ask for federal assistance. There is no precedent in modern US history for a president to wield federal troops in a state or municipality over the objections of the respective governor. Right now, the last thing the country needs—and, frankly, the US military needs—is the appearance of US soldiers carrying out the president's intent by descending on American citizens. This could wreck the high regard Americans have for their military, and much more.

Third, in a bid to create some appearance that he can empathize with those demonstrating peacefully in the streets, the president proclaimed himself the "ally of peaceful protesters." But, at that very moment, just a few hundred feet away across Lafayette Park, fully equipped riot police and troops violently, and without provocation, set upon the peaceful demonstrators there, manhandling and beating many of them, employing flash-bangs, riot-control agents, and pepper spray throughout. These demonstrators had done nothing to

warrant such an attack. Media who were watching over the scene craned their cameras to try to understand what had happened to justify this violence, until it became clear for all to see. The riot police had waded into these nonviolent American citizens—who were protesting massive social injustice—with the sole purpose of clearing the area around St. John's Episcopal Church, on the other side of the park, so the self-proclaimed "ally of peaceful protesters," Donald Trump, could pose there for a photo-op.

There had evidently been a debate within the president's inner circle about the efficacy of attempting a



national statement to create a sense of unity in this moment of crisis. Clearly, the argument in favour of such a statement did not carry the day. The president has failed to show sympathy, empathy, compassion, or understanding—some of the traits the nation now needs from its highest office. Perhaps sensing this moment as an opportunity for an easy victory after his appalling leadership failure in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, the president came down hard: hard on the governors and mayors he'd labelled as weak, the same ones he'd left to fend for themselves during the pandemic, and hard on the

Americans in the streets against whom he is preparing to dispatch "thousands upon thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel, and law enforcement." At the end of his speech, offhandedly saying something about going to pay homage to a national shrine, the president departed back into the White House.

St. John's Episcopal Church is one of the most historic churches in the United States, in which every president since James Madison has worshipped. It had been damaged the night before, when a fire had been contained in the basement with little damage. But on the afternoon of June 1, it was surrounded by members of the US Secret Service, other law-enforcement personnel, and soldiers. Tear gas was hanging in the air, with vomit still on the street from demonstrators overcome by gas and pepper spray. The debris of peaceful protesters attacked in the clearing operation littered the street. As it became clear where the president was headed, and as the reality of what was unfolding set in, a horrified nation looked on.

The president stood in front of St. John's, holding a Bible aloft, and expropriated the image of the church, the Holy Bible, and the Christian faith as the backdrop and basis for his words and deeds in dealing with this crisis. It wasn't enough that peaceful protesters had just been deprived of their First-Amendment rights—this photo-op sought to legitimize that abuse with a layer of religion. To make matters worse, he was joined in the church photo-op by the other members of his staff and cabinet, including the press secretary, the chief of staff, and the national security advisor. Much worse still, he was joined in the picture by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and Attorney General William Barr. ■

Courtesy: Foreign Policy Magazine

There comes a moment in all close relationships when both parties must decide whether they will work through their problems together, or if they will engage with those problems in a state of open hostility. The US and China—in the midst of a global health catastrophe and facing the worst economic crisis since World

War II—have chosen the path of open hostility. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated and reinforced economic and geostrategic competition between the two world powers. Even before the pandemic, Trump was already blaming China for more or less everything that has gone wrong in the United States. Ahead of the November

presidential election, he appears to be doubling down on this strategy—in part to distract from his own horrendous management of the coronavirus pandemic. However, despite the hullabaloo, the state of affairs has not gone beyond control. It seems that there will be some choppy seas ahead in US-China relations, worse than any previous troubles since 1979. The two countries are not yet heading toward exactly the same kind of cold war between the US and USSR where they led opposing alliance systems and separate economic blocs to wage a global ideological struggle, strategic rivalry and economic warfare. It is also an undeniable reality, to many analysts, that China needs US money to get out of its



Covid-19 and US-China Relations

Six areas to seek bilateral cooperation

Relations between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China were already very tense before the Covid-19 crisis. China's assertiveness on the international stage since the 2008 financial crisis and especially since President Xi Jinping rose to power in 2012-2013 has helped cement a bipartisan consensus in the United States that a tougher and more competitive approach toward China is required. In these trying times, the common threat posed by coronavirus could have provided an occasion for de-escalation of tensions if both capitals had decided to cooperate to tackle it together and alongside others. However, the pandemic has proven only to be a source of greater friction, rather than greater cooperation, between the two countries.

coronavirus depression while the United States needs Chinese-made medical supplies to specifically fight the coronavirus as well as China's products for its consumers and business in general. This necessity for cooperation is very real. So, both countries need to forego their hostility and must come up with a pragmatic strategy to resolve their issues. A ceasefire between Beijing and Washington on criticism of the two countries' initial responses to coronavirus is required. Moreover, there should be a commitment to an eventual international investigation of what went wrong in all countries during the early phases of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite all accusations and blames the United States puts on China, it must be acknowledged that the latter is now a repository of useful knowledge about the virus and how best to control its spread. It also has a very strong scientific community studying the origins of viruses and their medical treatment, who can cooperate with American experts both to find a vaccine and to develop effective treatments short of a vaccine. This is true even if it turns out that the virus actually leaked from a scientific facility in Wuhan with insufficient safeguards. There will be time later to assess the early mistakes of China and others in greater detail, but the virus is out there now and must be tackled together. The World Health Organization (WHO) and other multilateral institutions like the G20 should be bolstered to help address the medical and economic challenges that are likely to spread around the globe, particularly in countries with weak medical infrastructures and poor economies that will almost certainly suffer massive debt defaults. Again, this remains true even if international politics and institutional weakness delayed the WHO's initial response to Covid-19. It simply does not follow any logic (except a tortuous political one) that the proper response to any earlier failures by the WHO should be to cripple the major vehicle of international public health during a global pandemic. Keeping in view all these and the recent developments, here are six areas of cooperation that the United States



and China should pursue in both bilateral and multilateral settings that would serve their national interests and the interests of humanity, even if they do not necessarily fit the domestic political logics of leaders in Washington and Beijing. The list is suggestive and not intended to be exhaustive and can include cooperation among governments and non-governmental actors.

1. Share best practices. The two sides should share and learn best practices for how to slow the spread of the virus, including mistakes to be avoided. While it might be too soon to expect Beijing and Washington to agree to a probe of their early mistakes, it would be very helpful if each side would commit in principle to conduct such a probe after the virus has been brought under control and eliminated. This is unlikely to be our last pandemic. We all need to learn lessons for the long run and it would reduce political tensions between the two nations in the near term to recognize the eventual need for such a probe.

2. Cooperate on vaccine creation. The United States and China should work on vaccines together and should pledge to share any breakthroughs with each other and the rest of the world promptly when they are made. This can be done on a government-to-government basis or in cooperation between universities and companies. One sign of hope on that score is that Chinese and US scientists, including at Columbia University, have managed to perform collaborative research on the virus despite the conflicts between the two governments.

3. Prepare in advance for massive vaccine production and global vaccine distribution. Vaccinating everyone everywhere will be a massive logistical undertaking that will require great forethought before a vaccine is invented. Delays in distribution of even several months could easily cost astounding numbers of lives. If political fighting over who gets vaccines and when were to occur, it would be devastatingly destructive to international cooperation on any matter for years to come.

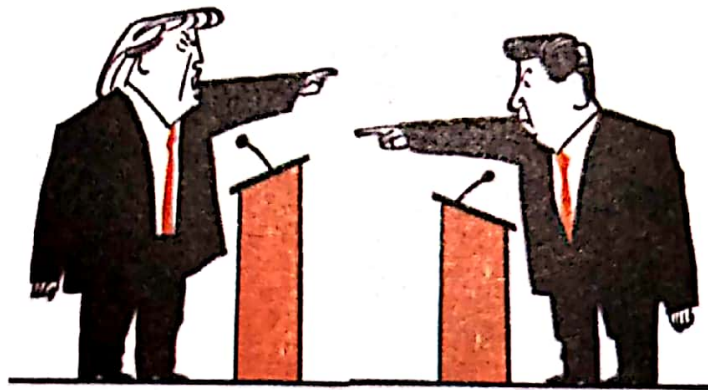
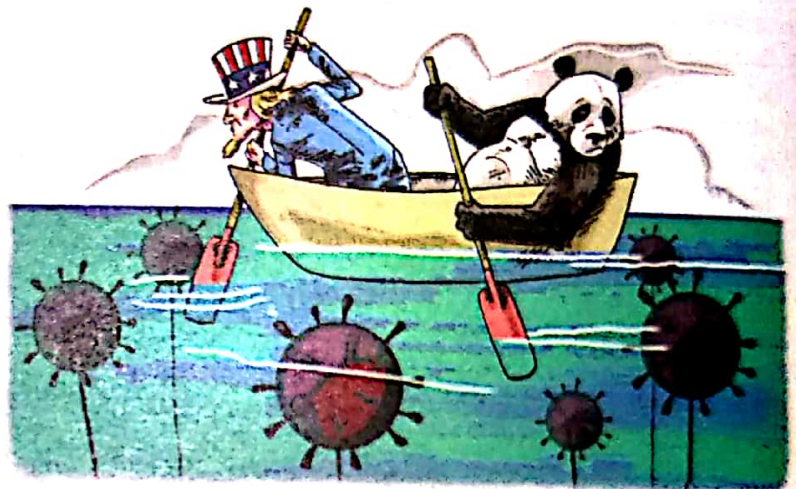
4. Assist the poorest nations in battling the virus. Cooperate to re-mediate suffering in the developing world

by boosting the medical response capacity in highly-vulnerable areas like sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, etc. In 2014, the United States and China cooperated effectively alongside many other countries to address the Ebola crisis in Africa. The WHO should be a major actor in this cooperation regardless of any problems related to the organization's public response in January 2020. And to the degree that the pandemic is accompanied by famines in some places, as seems likely, the United States and China should support the efforts of the World Food Programme to distribute provisions and eliminate distributional bottlenecks slowing the delivery of needed aid.

5. Cooperate to manage debt defaults in the developing world. The possibility of systematic debt defaults in the developing world seems quite real and this could have ripple effects in the entire global financial system. More multilateral cooperation will clearly be needed. The G-20 responded rather well to the 2008 financial crisis and should be called upon again to address this global recession. The Covid-19 crisis should also provide an opportunity for global bankers to push China to join international development financing groupings like the Paris Club, which reduce conflicts among lenders when debt crises occur around the globe. Without cooperation on debt restructuring, the international economy could be severely harmed by beggar-thy-neighbour strategies among lending institutions. In this context, the many non-transparent, bilateral infrastructure development loans made by China as part of the Belt and Road Initiative could loom particularly large.

6. Prioritize development of strategic reserves over economic nationalism. Nations are now more acutely aware of their dependence on foreign supplies of needed products in a world of globalization and transnational supply chains. But it should also be recognized that global trade has generally been a very positive factor for the world economy and that significant reductions in global trade will likely lead to more, not less, poverty and more, not less, vulnerability to disease and hunger. Two potential solutions to protect global trade would be the diversification of global supply chains so that a single country, like China, is not so essential to supply final manufactured goods. This would mean even more complex economic interactions around the world than we have today, but it would provide a much more efficient solution than each nation trying to produce many products entirely at home to reduce vulnerability.

To supplement such a globalist strategy, individual countries should be encouraged to create larger strategic reserves of needed medical and other supplies as an alternative to simply moving all production of such products back to their own countries. Economic nationalism as an alternative to strategic reserves would carry huge opportunity costs for global efficiency and wealth and could also infect international security politics in destabilizing ways. Similar approaches to stockpiling of internationally purchased products for security purposes have long been used effectively in the energy sector. In order to pursue such a constructive agenda, all countries should call a ceasefire on blaming others over



the early outbreak and global spread of the virus. To help facilitate this diplomatic ceasefire, all countries should commit to eventual international investigations into how they responded to the crisis, including mistakes and misdeeds done along the way. The WHO should be involved in such an investigation, and the United States

should be actively involved with the WHO to participate and help guide its involvement. For the reasons discussed above, it appears that neither the PRC nor the United States will likely be pleased to hear the eventual results of such an inquiry. But if they fail to cooperate now and continue to fight, and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of additional deaths occur as a result, each country will suffer even greater losses to its reputation and diplomatic standing than it would by accepting in advance that it will receive some criticism. China and the United States should be behaving like confident great powers, not like insecure and tragically flawed players in an ancient Greek drama. ■

Constitutional Basis of Local Government in Pakistan

Introduction

There is growing evidence to show the link between development and local government. The Covid-19 crisis has underlined, once again, the need for local government; it showed that non-traditional security threats had to be addressed by strengthening the governance and institutional structures. Almost whole of Pakistan witnessed orders of executive civilian officers for lockdowns with little or no community ownership and poor level of enforcement. The enforcement was essentially criminal in nature and required coercive actions on the part of local police. The community-led lockdowns involving government support were not witnessed at all. In this context, there is good case to study the relationship between local government and the Constitution of Pakistan. This write-up will try to briefly trace the constitutional basis of local government system in topical manner.

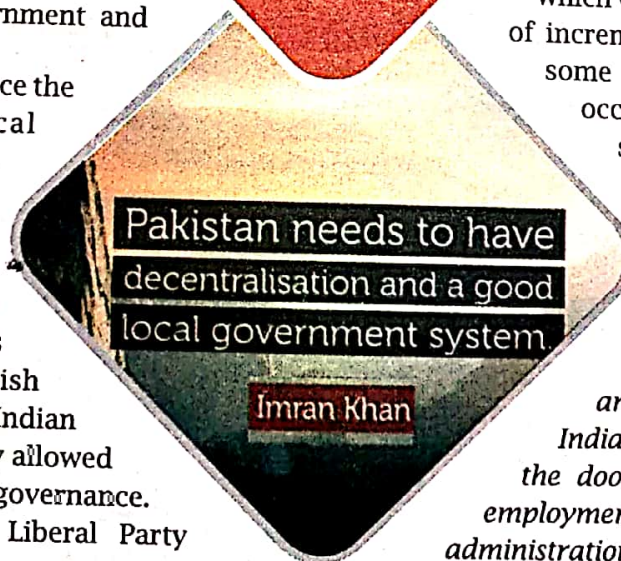
1. British-Era Colonial Rule to Self-Rule

After the War of Independence, 1857, British exerted tight controls on Indians. In 1861, the British Parliament passed a law called the Indian Councils Act, 1861, which partially allowed unelected local representation in governance. Hereafter, in 1906, when the Liberal Party

formed government in Britain, and in response to agitation in British India, a new law was enacted in 1909. The law was titled as the Indian Councils Act, 1909, and was the result of reforms proposed by John Morley, the then Secretary of State for India, and Lord Minto, the British viceroy of India (1905-10). The reforms proposed by the two are famously styled as Minto-Morley Reforms in the textbooks in Pakistan. The 1909 law provided for 'elected' representation, which was an improvement on 1861 law that had provided for an 'unelected' representation. The 1909 law broke the ground inasmuch as self-governance is concerned. The Government of India Act, 1919, [a.k.a. Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms] took it further, which was no better but from the viewpoint of incremental improvement, it did provide some space. The King of England, at this occasion, issued a proclamation, which summed up the constitutional history of transfer of power to its rightful recipients, the Indians. It stated:

"The Acts of 1773 and 1784 were designed to establish a regular system of administration and justice under the Honourable East India Company. The Act of 1833 opened the door for Indians to public office and employment. The Act of 1858 transferred the administration from the Company to the Crown

Kamran Adil



and laid the foundations of public life which exists in India today. The Act of 1861 sowed the seed of representative institutions, and the seed was quickened into life by the Act of 1909. The Act which has now become law entrusts the elected representative of the people with a definite share in the Government and points the way to full responsible Government hereafter."

The principle of 'full responsible' government was, therefore, constitutionally introduced by the Government of India Act, 1919. Since the Act of 1919 was complete eyewash, therefore, fathoming the increasing indignation for them in Indians about their sham acts, the law provided for a statutory commission to be set up after 10 years to further review the law. Accordingly, the year 1928 witnessed the arrival of Simon Commission to British India. The Simon Commission produced two-volume report, which was largely rejected by the Indians. However, the report was used to draft the Government of India Act, 1935. As proposed by the Simon Commission, the Act of 1935 abolished diarchy of 1919 law and also provided for the concept of Federation for British India, leading to the supplementary concept of provincial autonomy. Section 311 of the 1935 Act provided for a definition of 'Local Government', which essentially meant regional/provincial governments in the context of the Act. Besides, this Act referred to municipalities and laws of local government as were applicable in Madras and cantonment areas. The right to self-determination further emanated out of the principle of self-government and became the basis of decolonization in the post-Second World War era.

2. Self-Rule to Local Government

A. 1956 Constitution

Decentralization was not envisioned by the 1956 Constitution. It divided the legislative business into three legislative lists: federal, concurrent and provincial. It enlisted local government as item 15 on the Provincial List for legislation.

B. 1962 Constitution

The 1962 Constitution provided constitutional linkage to local government. The linkage was developed to dispel the perception of legitimacy for President as the local government bodies (basic democracies established under the Basic Democracies Order, 1959) were to act as Electoral College for the office of the President. This arrangement also necessitated constitutional protection under the Basic Democracies Order, 1959, in the Fourth Schedule

to the Constitution read with Article 6(3)(ii). The concept of local government was driven more by desire to gain political legitimacy than to serve the people and to empower them.

C. 1973 Constitution

Articles 32 and 37(i) of the original 1973 Constitution provided for non-binding constitutional obligations on the state to 'decentralize' the administration. The provincial local government laws were, thus, promulgated on the basis of the constitutional law. The local government system, however, could not take roots in the country due to political and administrative reasons. In 2000, Musharraf government rolled out a Local Government Proposed Plan, and later in line with the Plan, the local government ordinances for the provinces were promulgated in 2001. Musharraf government protected the local government laws it had promulgated through the Chief Executive Order. No. 24 of Legal Framework Order, 2002 (LFO, 2002). The LFO, 2002 was then shielded through 17th Constitutional Amendment that provided temporal protection to the local government laws by amending Article 268 of the Constitution. Thereafter, in 2010, through 18th Constitutional Amendment, binding constitutional provisions requiring the provincial governments to 'devolve' administrative, financial and political responsibilities were added. It also mandated the Election Commission of Pakistan to carry out local government elections. As of 2020, the provincial legislation based on the constitutional provisions has been introduced in all the provinces. The provincial legislations are complex and have yet to realize implementation.

The Way Forward

The difficult part of devolution is its institutionalization and sharing of resources, both equally and equitably. For a country of Pakistan's size, local government system must be introduced to ensure that people are served at the grassroots level. The comparative study of the provincial legislations dealing with local government systems must be carried out to collect data that can be used to enable decision-makers to develop policy choices based on evidence. ■

The author is an independent researcher and has done his BCL from the University of Oxford.
Email: kamranadilps@gmail.com



M.H. Rehman

Economic crisis of Pakistan is neither new nor simple. It is a result of accumulation of problems over the last three decades in wide-ranging areas from mismanagement to corruption, neglect

of innovation in agriculture sector to criminal apathy towards efficient storage and use of water, and rapid population growth to failure in making the population productive through sufficient industrialization. The country is home to one of the most rapidly increasing populations around the world. No matter what the government may do, resources and opportunities will always be outpaced by the number of mouths to feed and number of people seeking employment, if population keeps growing at such high rates.

Economic challenges are a combination of these problems plus other factors. Country's economy is heavily dependent on political situation, which more often than not remains

Significance of economic stability for any country cannot be overemphasized, and in the presence

of a constant drain on an economy, no matter how strong, economic stability will always remain a dream. Systemic fault lines in an economy—and that too formed and forged on political considerations—can tumble the whole economy if not addressed on war footings. The economic quagmire Pakistan finds itself in for the last many years has a lot to do with huge drain on an already constrained fiscal space by the sinking State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). This is a multiple-edged sword, which, by taking a significant chunk of federal expenditure away from productive uses, deprives the economy of much-needed breathing space and value addition.

In the absence of economic foresight, no hesitation in preferring petty, short-term political gains over significant and long-term economic problems, focus on party politics rather than on larger national interest and sheer lack of capacity to understand complex economic dynamics, those at the helm of affairs have done more harm to the national economy by their shortsighted decisions than one could imagine. Huge domestic and international borrowing to finance showy yet inefficient projects only to gain political mileage is one such shortsighted decision, and cramping thousands of political workers into SOEs in the name of providing jobs is another.

The former has led to a situation where 55 percent of the total federal budget for FY 2019-20 was consumed by interest payments and repayments of loans, with interest payments constituting more than 72 percent of these payments, which means repayments of loans is nowhere in sight in foreseeable future. Put simply, this means that only 45 percent of the total budget was, effectively, available to

Economic Crunch

Sinking SOEs

tax

GDP

PAKISTAN STEEL

run the country. In the Budget 2020-21, repayment of foreign loans stands at zero due to concessions by international donors and financial institutions owing to Covid-19 pandemic; however, interest payments have gone up. How hard it is to understand that a country's survival in only 45 percent of its budget is under serious threat? Or to imagine how good it would be if the country could utilize 100 percent of its budget, for that matter.

The latter exacerbates the situation further and contracts an already dwindling fiscal space to the point where it becomes suffocating. Minister for Industries and Production, Mr Hammad Azhar, informed the Senate of Pakistan on 6th June 2020 that the accumulated losses of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) had exceeded the annual defence budget outlay. He held the previous visionless, regressive and backward governments that made huge inductions in these SOEs responsible for the fiasco. While aggregate figures of losses of SOEs are not provided in any official documents, figures of defence budget outlay are. For FY 2019-20, expenditure on defence affairs and services stood at Rs1153 billion and with addition of Rs327 billion of military pensions, the total comes to Rs1480 billion. Assuming that losses of SOEs exceeded the defence budget just marginally, it would be around Rs1500 billion for the year. Yes, Rs1500 billion just for one year! These Rs1500 billion make 20.6 percent of the total budget figure of Rs7293 billion for FY 2019-20.

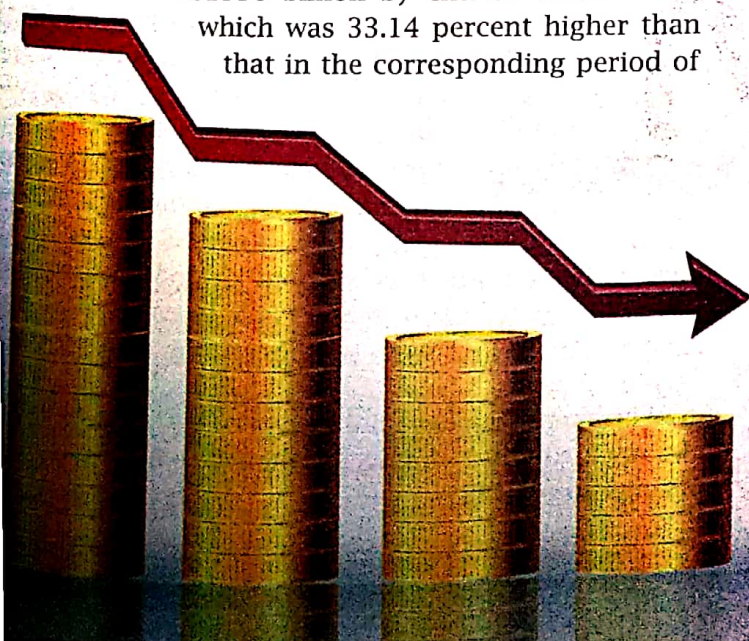
According to some media reports, the debt and liabilities of SOEs, including domestic and foreign, had gone up to Rs1590 billion by end of March 2019, which was 33.14 percent higher than that in the corresponding period of

the year before. In absolute term, the debt and liabilities of SOEs had enhanced by Rs396.6 in one year. The break-up of Rs1590 billion showed that debt of the SOEs stood at Rs1380 billion and liabilities at Rs214.9 billion. PIA's debt increased to Rs156.9 billion by the end of March 2019 as compared to Rs148.1 billion in March 2018. The PIA still needed billions of rupees to meet its expenses as well as to get new planes on lease. The PIA had been facing

Rs4 billion in monthly revenue losses along with Rs1.5 billion in average interest payments monthly. Debt of Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) had remained at Rs43.2 billion. The PSM was forced to shut down in July 2015 and since then government has been incurring expenditures on employees' salaries, medical facilities, and various maintenance and utility costs, all amounting to billions of rupees. Debt of Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) stood at Rs88 billion in March 2019 while that of Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) at Rs5.5 billion by

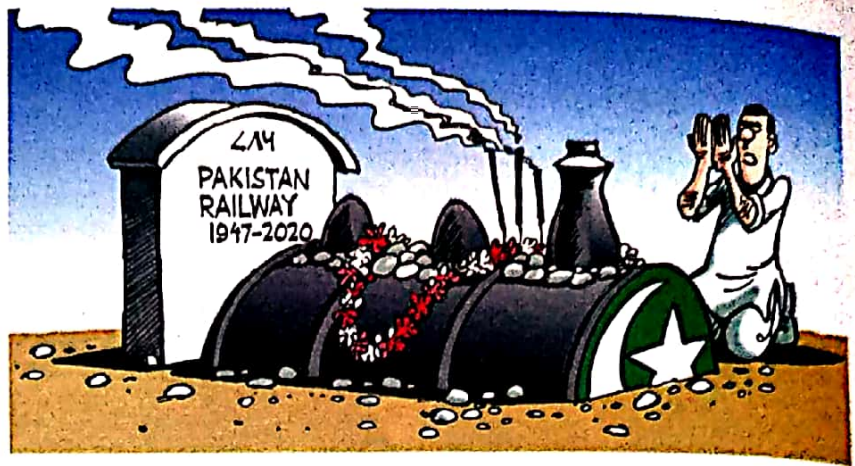
the same time. Meanwhile, debt of other SOEs had swelled to Rs1084.8 billion at the end of March 2019 as compared to Rs677.4 billion of the March 2018, which reflects incumbent government's inability to check the situation by any means, let alone improve it. One year on, all these figures must have increased further, having a bigger toll on taxpayers' money.

From where are these huge losses met? Who pays for them and who bears the brunt? Some of these losses are met from further borrowing by these SOEs, of course on interest that only tightens the vicious circle and debt trap these SOEs are already in, but majority of these losses are met by government grants. Due to absence of official figures, assuming that half the losses are met by the government, it's a drain of additional 10.3 percent on the resource pool available. So, from the 45 percent of the total budget left after interest payments and repayments of loans, an additional 10.3 percent would be eaten up by these SOEs and now the country is left with only 34.7 percent of its budget. At Rs1480 billion, 20 percent goes to Defence and we are left with only 14.7 percent to do everything else, absolutely everything under the sun other than these three heads. One would dearly wish it were a joke. It's not! But yes it is a mockery, of more than 220 million people, of this land we call our home, of our future. Can any sane mind make claims of improved health, education, food, civic amenities, law and order, advances in science and technology, poverty



alleviation, improved justice system and, after all, a robust economy? Is it even thinkable? The incumbent government is right when it says it received an economy that was in shambles. What is not right though is the apparent absent-mindedness, if not intentional negligence and connivance, of this government too regarding the issues that continue to plague the economy, sinking SOEs being a major plague. There is a full-fledged Ministry of Privatization in the country headed by a Federal Minister; however, what the Ministry has done since the formation of new government in July 2018 is nowhere to be seen. According to Privatization Commission's website, last privatization in the country was that of National Power Construction Company (NPCC) way back in November 2015. The current government has maintained a much-trumpeted list of SOEs to be privatized since its first day in office, however, no tangible progress has been made towards actual privatization of even a single entity. What is more worrisome is the absence of indication of any serious intent or planning for meaningful efforts towards privatization in near future as well. Even from the point of view of a government's ability to absorb the negative fallouts of privatization, such as firing of employees and criticism by opposition parties, initial years of a tenure are most conducive for privatization as compared to later years when elections draw nearer. PTI/led government may, therefore, soon find it impossible to implement its privatization agenda, if it had any.

An important aspect of grants by government to offset losses of SOEs is that of legitimacy. Taxes paid by individuals to the government are meant to finance various civic provisions such as health, education, security, socioeconomic development, and infrastructure. Can the government incessantly use taxpayers' money for unsuccessful bail-out packages to sick SOEs? Why should the general public pay for losses of these SOEs in which they had no part to play? It must be borne in mind that these SOEs do not provide any social services rather they are commercial entities and every individual has to purchase any services the SOEs in question offer, such as air tickets from PIA, electricity from various DISCOs under WAPDA, gas and petroleum products extracted by OGDCL. How logical and legal, or morally and ethically



valid, is it to make the masses pay to these SOEs twice? It is high time the government prioritized privatization of all SOEs that are running losses. A principled decision, backed by persistent practical steps, is required without further ado that it is neither government's work nor feasible for it to manage commercial organizations that these SOEs are. Government must provide employment opportunities to the people not by reckless and much-

beyond-capacity recruitments in SOEs but by job creation in productive sectors that would have multiplier effect and lead to an expanded and growing economy. The government should know that disposal of sick SOEs will provide a quick yet long-term fix to the ailing economy. If only the government can do away with these SOEs before the next budget, yes it is possible if pursued with rigour and unswerving commitment, it will have a handsome additional fiscal space of around Rs.1500 billion. To put it into perspective, the government could increase its PSDP by 240 percent from this additional fiscal space, taking it to an all-time high in country's history. Or it can increase funding for education, health, security, infrastructure and poverty alleviation by at least 5 times each. No more IMF programs would be needed, large water

reservoirs could be built without any external financing, tens of high-tech universities could be established, so on and so forth, just from savings of one year's losses of SOEs.

Government should capitalize upon this low hanging fruit before it runs out of time. A right decision at a wrong time brings no good. ■

The writer is a Fulbright alumnus, presently serving as Deputy Secretary in the Federal Government.

On June 11, Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, launched Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20, according to which the country missed all major economic targets due to the coronavirus outbreak, which resulted in a negative 0.38 percent economic growth rate for the outgoing year. This negative growth happened mainly as a result of dismal performance of industrial and services sectors. However, agriculture and small industries, both largely in the informal sector, posted positive growth. The only mentionable achievement the Survey reported this year is reduction in the current account balance by 71 percent.

Pakistan Economic Survey

2019-20

No hits, many misses!

Hira Batool

The Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20 is out now, and according to this annual document, growth targets in the sectors of agriculture, livestock, industry, minerals, services and finance could not be achieved, due to coronavirus. The Survey shows that the economy's resilience in a deepening crisis has been impaired as it has shown worst performance in 68 years. The Survey has given a preliminary estimate of the GDP growth rate this year which is -0.38 percent. The last time the GDP declined in a particular year was as far back as 1951-52, when the economy was hit by a big decline in agricultural production. This time it is clearly the large negative impact of Covid-19. However, amidst the overall dismal performance of industrial and services sectors, agriculture and small industries posted positive growth. While agriculture has largely been immune from the effects of coronavirus, the document paints a bleaker picture among other sectors. The document says, "72% of Pakistan's non-agriculture workforce is engaged in the informal sector, with no social security or insurance cover and it may take a major hit. The estimated size of informal employment in non-agriculture sector is around 27

million, with only food, pharmaceuticals and few services still functional, these employees will be worst affected." The data released by the government presents a dismal performance as all indicators painted broad-based setbacks. Although Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, has blamed Covid-19 for the loss of over Rs3 trillion to the national income, the period covered by the data includes mostly the first nine months of the fiscal year (July 2019 to March 2020), much of what is portrayed cannot be attributed to the disruptions from the pandemic. Addressing the launching ceremony of the Survey, the advisor said that the fiscal year 2020, before coronavirus spread, showed dedicated efforts of the government for addressing structural issues that had caused macroeconomic imbalances back in FY 2018. However, numbers show a startling picture. For example, credit to the private sector fell sharply from Rs554.7bn last year to Rs187.3bn this year in the July to March period. This is a marked decline and shows a sharp deceleration underway in private sector activity. The breakdown paints an even

starker picture. Working capital loans, for example, dropped from Rs369bn last year to Rs28.8bn this year in the same period. Loans for fixed investment dropped from Rs83.1bn last year to negative Rs5.2bn this year, meaning, on net, there was negative investment in the country this fiscal year. At the same time, the amount of foregone revenue from tax exemptions jumped to Rs1.15tr this year. Only a few years ago, the figure was less than half this amount. The sharp increase in exemptions given to businesses over the two years that this government has been power has no doubt contributed to this picture.

Stabilisation continued to be defined by the economic team leaders, echoed in the Survey, as a decline in the current account deficit, which began declining from December 2019, well before the new economic team was installed—from 20 billion dollars inherited by the PTI administration to around 11.4 billion dollars by April 2019—a decline of 43 percent. By March 2020 (pre-Covid-19) the current account deficit had declined to 2.8 billion dollars or a decline of 75 percent from April 2019 and this is partly attributable to the massive decline in the international oil prices, a major import item for the country, higher remittances which are expected to decline post-Covid-19 due to lockdown in the Middle East and other countries while exports rose by a couple of hundred million dollars.

However, an incredibly high price was paid for this narrowing in the current account deficit from May 2019 to April 2020 through contractionary fiscal and monetary policies including: (i) an unrealistic tax target of 5.5 trillion rupees that was to be realised through widening the tax net but with sustained opposition by powerful pressure groups the government failed to achieve the target. However, it raised total revenue by 30.9 percent in comparison to the previous year by increasing taxes, particularly minimum tax based on turnover, on existing taxpayers, thereby stifling the economy. Expenditure, however, could not be reined in; it registered a 30 percent increase in current and 40 percent in development expenditure; (ii) market-based exchange rate from the second week of May 2019 that led to a large rupee depreciation resulting in a massive rise in the country's debt payments as each rupee loss of value against the dollar adds around 100 billion rupees to the country's debt. For the first time, perhaps, the primary balance was stated to be a positive 0.5 percent during the first nine months of the current year but for some reason, this

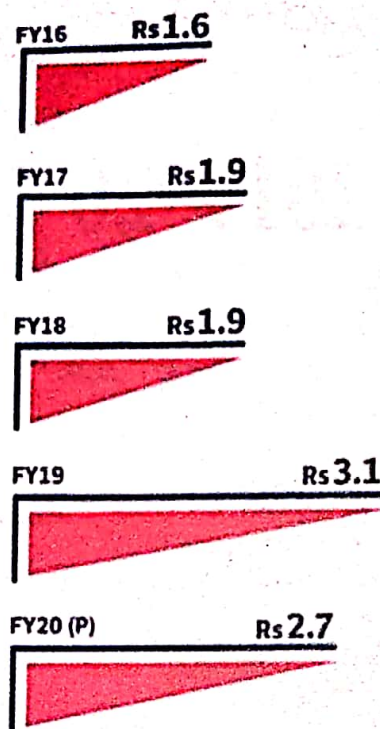
statistic is not reflected in IMF's Rapid Response Instrument documents for the entire year for either pre-Covid-19 (negative 0.8 percent) or post-Covid-19 (negative 2.9 percent) projections; and (iii) a high discount rate that stifled all economic activity leading to a decline in private sector borrowing.

Thus, if stabilisation implies negative industrial growth (2.64 percent with a decline of negative 7.78 percent in large-scale manufacturing sector), rising unemployment pre-Covid-19 not quantified (with PIDE study quoted in the Survey focused on post-Covid-19 period maintains that 1.4 million jobs would be lost in case of limited pandemic-related restrictions and 12.3 million in case of a complete shutdown), a decline of 0.59 percent in the services sector with 3.43 percent decline in wholesale and retail trade and 7.13 percent in transport, storage and communications, the unchecked locust attack coupled with serious water issues has not only badly affected the output of a sector that, to all purposes, was immune to the attack of the pandemic (agriculture sector target grew by 2.67 percent against the target

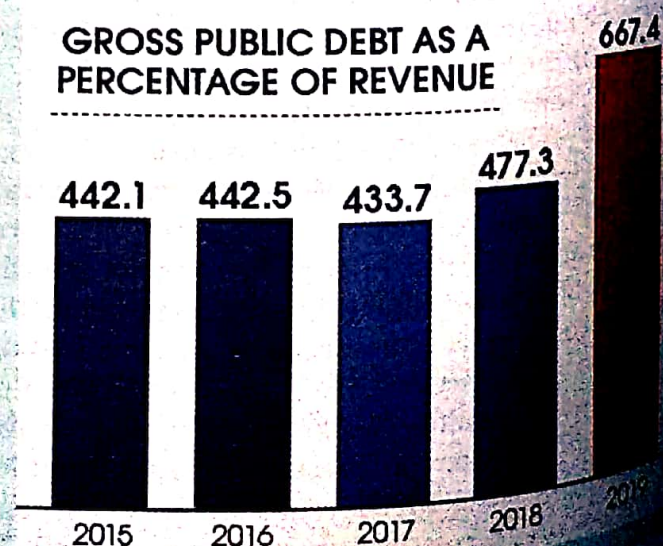
growth of 3.5 percent) but has pushed millions of farm workers and small and subsistence farmers under the poverty line and a rise in inflation from its pre-May 2019 level then stabilisation was achieved. Covid-19 exacerbated the issues facing the economy that began soon after the economic team leaders agreed to the IMF's prior conditions on 12 May 2019.

Growth projection of negative 0.38 percent for the current year in the survey is markedly lower than that made by the

Debt servicing (in trillions)



GROSS PUBLIC DEBT AS A PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE



IMF of negative 1.5 percent (April 2020 documents on the Rapid Financing Instrument) and the World Bank's negative 2.6 percent (May documents on Global Economic Prospects). The Advisor's explanation: the divergence is because of uncertainty generated from different values placed on the duration, extent and restrictions imposed to tackle the spread of the virus. Be that as it may, erring on the side of misplaced optimism appears not to be a wise approach as that may blindside the government from taking timely appropriate mitigating measures in the budget particularly when the virus is yet to peak in Pakistan.

Growth is a critical projection on which key macroeconomic indicators, for example, tax-to-GDP ratio, development and current expenditure as a percentage of GDP, public debt as a percentage of GDP and fiscal imbalance as a percentage of GDP are calculated. It is hoped that the negative 0.38 percent growth rate projected for 2019-20 in the Survey would not be a component of the budget to be presented to parliament today, especially if last year's budget projections that mirror what was indicated in IMF's EFF documents are taken as precedence. And in the event the budget is based on the Survey growth rate, it is likely to be of a lesser duration than previous ones whose validity lasted no more than a quarter of a year, necessitating 'mini-budgets' that included readjustment in expenditure and revenue generation.

This is not to underestimate the impact of Covid-19 on the country's fragile economy but we must not lose sight of the fact that things were not hunky-dory before the onset of Covid-19 either. The current year will end with a fiscal deficit of 9.1%. The total public debt from July 2019 to March 2020 soared to 88%, up from 74.2% of the GDP from the corresponding period of last year. And if liabilities are added, the ratio jumps to 102.6% of GDP. Empirical evidence shows that most of the countries which have succeeded in balancing the government's books and achieving durable stability have focused on rightsizing the government. Tax exemptions have surged to Rs1.15tr this year. Critics recall that it was half the amount a few years ago. The circular debt in the energy sector and huge losses of bleeding state-owned enterprises are far from being resolved.

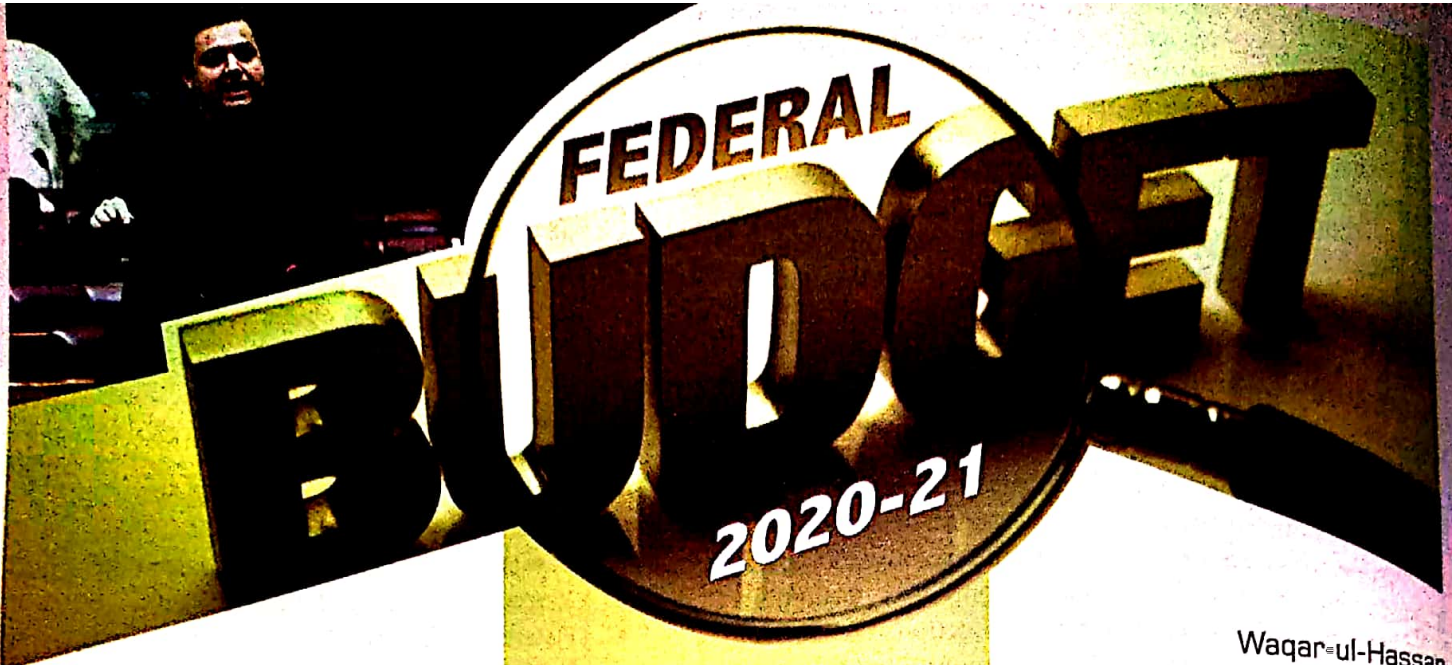
The government did succeed in curtailing imports during July-April by 16.2% but exports were on a downward trajectory, falling 3.9% during the same period as compared to last year's comparative figure. However, current account was reduced by 71%. The exchange rate remained relatively stable after the rapid depreciation of the rupee. Foreign exchange reserves were replenished through external capital and financial inflows and dollars remitted by overseas workers.

As the current trends observed in the economic survey indicate both high growth and durable stability may remain elusive in the immediate future. The situation calls for a culture change in the country's economic management. ■

Highlights of the Survey

Following are the highlights of Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20:

- Provisional GDP growth estimated negative 0.38%
- Agriculture sector grew by 2.67%
- Cotton production reduced by 6.9%
- wheat production grew by 2.5%
- Rice production increased by 2.9%
- Sugarcane production reduced by 0.4%
- Industrial sector grew by 2.64%
- LSM sector growth decreased by 5.4%
- Fertilizers production grew by 5.81%
- Leather products increased by 4.96%
- Rubber products increased by 4.31%
- Auto mobile production decreased by 36.50%
- Wood products decreased by 22.11%
- Coke and petroleum products decreased by 17.46%
- Mining and quarry sector decreased by 8.82%
- Fiscal deficit increased to 9.1%
- Total expenditures increased by 15.8%
- Total revenues increased by 30.9%
- Current expenditure increased by 16.9%
- Development expenditure increased by 14.2%
- Non-tax revenues increased by 159.9%
- Direct tax collection increased by 14.1%
- Provisional government revenues increased by 12.2%
- SBP reduced policy rate by cumulative 525 bps
- NFA of banking sector increased by Rs 893.7 billion
- NDA of banking registered expansion of Rs587.6 billion
- Net govt borrowing increased by Rs911.7 billion
- Government borrowing for budgetary support increased by Rs1023.9 billion
- KSE-100 index registered modest growth of 0.61%
- Headlines inflation (CPI) averaged at 10.9% during Jul-May
- Urban food inflation recorded at 13.6%
- Rural food inflation recorded at 16.0%
- Whole Sale Price Index recorded increased of 11.1%
- Sensitive Price Index recorded an increase of 14.0 %
- Exports decreased by 3.9% in Jul-April
- Imports reduced by 16.2% in Jul-April
- Trade deficit contracted by 29.5%
- Remittances increased by 5.5%
- Net FDI increased by 126.8%
- Foreign exchange reserves till end April 2020 stood at \$18.7 billion
- Average exchange rate remained Rs157.1 to a dollar
- Education enrollment increased by 7.1%
- Number of teachers increased to 1.83 million
- Estimated population growth and fertility rate is 1.94 per annum and 3.3 children per women
- Rs456 million disbursed under Kamyab Jawan Scheme



The federal government presented, on June 12, largely tax-free budget for fiscal year 2020-21 with a total outlay of Rs7.137 trillion, reflecting a reduction in its size by 11 percent from the budget estimates for fiscal 2019-20. The resource availability for 2020-21 is estimated at Rs6314.9 billion as against Rs4917.2 billion in budget estimates for 2019-20 with net revenue receipts estimated at Rs3699.5 billion, reflecting an increase of 6.7 percent over budget estimates for the current year. The provincial share in federal taxes is, however lower by 11.7 percent than the budget estimates for the current year. Net capital receipts are projected to increase by a hefty 75.93 percent Rs1463.2 billion as against Rs831.7 billion for the current year. The external receipts for 2020-21 are estimated at Rs2222.9 billion, reflecting a decrease of 26.7 percent over the budget estimates for the current year.

Salient features

The budget 2020-21 has the following salient features:
-Total outlay of budget 2020-21 is Rs7,294.9 billion. This size is 11 percent lower than the size of budget estimates for 2019-20.

On June 12, Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Hammad Azhar, presented in National Assembly the federal budget for the financial year 2020-21, having a total outlay of Rs7.137 trillion as against Rs3.70 trillion worth of net federal revenue, leaving a deficit of Rs3.43 trillion which comes to something around 7% of the GDP. That the net federal revenue is not even enough to cater to two major liabilities of the federal government —defence Rs1.28 trillion and debt servicing Rs2.94 trillion, equalling Rs4.22 trillion — speaks of the hollowness of the government coffers. The total revenue, however, is estimated at Rs6.57 trillion, including Rs4.96 trillion tax revenue and Rs1.61 trillion non-tax revenue. It's the Rs2.87 trillion worth of provincial transfers under the NFC Award that reduces the federal revenue to Rs3.70 trillion.

Waqar-ul-Hassan

-The resource availability during 2020-21 has been estimated at Rs6,314.9 billion against Rs4,917.2 billion in the budget estimates for 2019-20.

-The net revenue receipts for 2020-21 have been estimated at Rs3,699.5 billion, indicating an increase of 6.7 percent over the budget estimates for 2019-20.

-The provincial share in federal taxes is estimated at Rs2,873.7 billion during 2020-21, which is 11.7 percent lower than the budget estimates for 2019-20.

-The net capital receipts for 2020-21 have been estimated at Rs1,463.2 billion against the budget estimates of Rs831.7 billion in 2019-20, reflecting an increase of 75.93 percent.

-The external receipts in 2020-21 are estimated at Rs2,222.9 billion. This shows a decrease of 26.7 percent over the budget estimates for 2019-20.

-The overall expenditure during 2020-21 has been estimated at Rs7,294.9 billion, out of which the

current expenditure is Rs6,345 billion.
-The development expenditure outside PSDP has been estimated at Rs70 billion in the budget.
-The size of Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for 2020-21 is Rs1,324 billion. Out of this, and amount of Rs676 billion has been allocated to provinces.

-Federal PSDP has been estimated at Rs650 billion, out of which Rs418.7 billion for Federal Ministries/Divisions, Rs100.4 billion for Corporations, Rs3 billion for Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), Rs7 billion for Covid responsive and other natural calamities programme.

-Total Federal Board of Revenue taxes for the year 2020-21 are estimated at Rs4,963 billion.

-Non-tax revenues for the upcoming year are estimated at Rs1,108.9 billion.

-Gross revenue receipts are estimated at Rs6,573.22 billion out of which provincial share is Rs2,873 billion.

-The net revenue receipts for federal government in budget 2020-21 are estimated at Rs3,699 billion, showing an increase of 6.8 percent over the budget estimates of 2019-20 and 19.24 percent over revised estimates of outgoing fiscal year 2019-20.

A. External resources

-The government obtained loans and grants to bridge the gap between the receipts and expenditure. The net external resources for 2020-21 after deduction of foreign loans repayment (Rs1,228 billion) and repayment of short-term credits (Rs183 billion) have been projected at Rs810.34 billion are lower by 73 percent and 64.34 percent respectively when compared with budget and

revised estimates 2019-20.

B. Current Expenditures

-Total current expenditures of federal government for the year 2020-21 are estimated at Rs6,344 billion which are 16.7 percent and 12.99 percent lower when compared to the revised estimation and actual estimation of current expenditures during the outgoing year.

-Mark-up payments for the year 2020-21 have been estimated at Rs2,946 billion out of which Rs2,631 billion would be paid on domestic debt and Rs315 billion on foreign debt.

-Expenditures of Rs470 billion have been estimated for pensions which are 1.4 percent higher when compared to the revised estimates of Rs463.4 billion for the outgoing year 2019-20.

-For Defence Affairs and Services, an amount of Rs1,289 billion has been estimated for the year 2020-21 compared to revised estimation of Rs1,227 billion for the outgoing fiscal year 2019-20.

-For grants and transfers, Rs904 billion have been estimated against revised estimation of Rs1,177 billion for the year 2019-20.

-Subsidies have been estimated at Rs209 billion against revised estimation of Rs349.5 billion for 2019-20.

-For running of civil government, Rs475.7 billion have been estimated for the fiscal year 2020-21 against revised expenditures of Rs445.8 billion in 2019-20.

Analysis

The federal budget for the fiscal year 2020-2021 comes at a challenging time when economic growth all over the world has been severely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. It appears that the government has attempted to create a favourable budget in order to provide some sort of relief to the common people and decided against burdening them with a new set of taxes. This, the government hopes, would contribute in reviving economic activity that has stagnated during the last few months.

That the government did not announce an increase in salaries and pensions of its employees and pensioners clearly shows that it has had to make difficult decisions due to the many constraints pre-

COVID-19 Interventions

Rs. 35.0 billion

Tax Relief through Reduction in Stamp Duty from 5% to 1% in Urban Areas for Revival of Construction Industry by BOR, Punjab

Rs. 10.0 billion

Block Allocation in FY 2020-21 for undertaking broad-based COVID-19 related initiatives

Rs. 943 million

Infection Control Program to check the transmission of Infectious diseases in Punjab

Rs. 3.0 billion

Allocation of Funds for COVID-19 Prevention and Control to Specialized Healthcare department

Rs. 9.5 billion

Punjab Rozgar (with multiplier effect, loans expected to be more than 25 billion) (Project Cost)

Renewed focus on skill development programs such as Skills Development Programme and Hunarmand Nojawan (TEVTA) etc

FY 2020-21

~ Rs. 10.0 billion

Tax Relief by PRA due to reduction of Punjab Sales Tax on Services in various sectors

~ Rs. 1.86 billion

Incentives in Rebates and Waiver of Surcharges on Payment of Urban Immovable Property Tax



sented by the ongoing economic situation in the country and worldwide. This is also why subsidies have been slashed by 40 percent. The focus seems to be on inviting foreign direct investment (FDI) targeting a 25 percent increase and using public investment to create jobs and address poverty. The government is also hoping that it will be able to spend its development budget on areas previously ignored and help remove the vast disparities that exist in different parts of the country. The increase in the budget for defence is expected because of an increasingly aggressive India and the need to improve border management. Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of this year's budget is that the biggest chunk, Rs2.946 trillion, has had to be allocated for interest payments and debt-servicing. To manage everything else with what is left behind is rather difficult.

Perhaps the government could have introduced a greater increase in the health budget as the healthcare system is under tremendous pressure. Education should have been prioritised better as well. This year, the government has placed immense trust in the FBR's ability to perform, as the body is expected to achieve a Rs4.963 tax collection target, which would be a significant increase from the preceding year. Let's hope it can rise to the occasion.

An Analysis of Provincial Budgets

Punjab

Punjab's total outlay was Rs2.24 trillion, backed by a 13% improvement in provincial tax collection. The province is also providing a Rs56 billion tax relief to businesses to help cope with Covid-19. Tax rates on over 20 services would be cut from the present 16% to just 5%. These include smaller hotels, wedding halls, catering, IT services, tour operators, gyms, property dealers, and car rental services. Sales tax on health insurance, doctor's fees and hospital fees are also being slashed. In an interesting effort to digitise the economy, the Punjab government is proposing maintaining the 16% sales tax on restaurants and beauty parlours for cash payments, but cutting it to 5% for electronic payments. The development budget has been set at Rs337 billion, and sales tax for public-private partnerships has been cut to zero for five years to attract

investment. The education budget is Rs391 billion, and the health budget is Rs284 billion, which includes Rs13 billion for Covid-19 pandemic response.

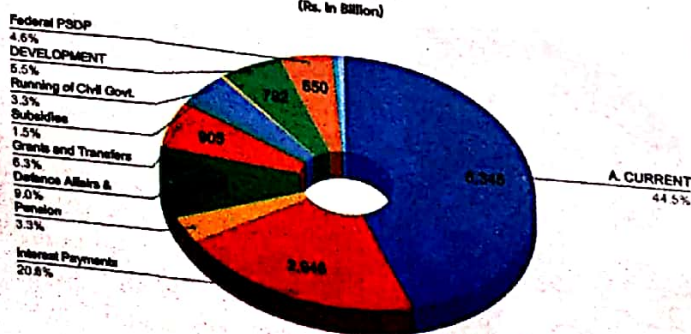
Sindh

The Sindh government has prioritised the health sector in its Rs1.24 trillion deficit budget. No new taxes have been added, and government salaries have risen by up to 10%. Some 1,414 new government employees will also be hired. The development budget has been set at Rs232.9 billion, down 18% from last year. The increase in non-pro-poor social protection and economic sustainability spending of Rs34.2 billion, a Rs19 billion rise in health spending, and an additional Rs22.9 billion for education. One of the other positives was a Health Risk Allowance equal to one month's basic pay for all health personnel, including postgraduate and house job officers, who have been working on Covid-19 patients.

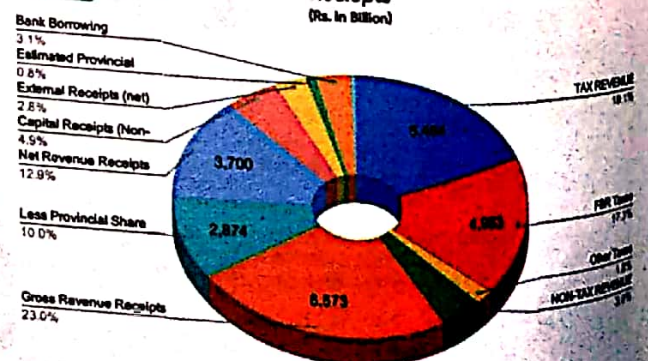
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan have both announced their budgets, and as expected, there has been significant belt-tightening brought on by the economic impact of Covid-19 and other revenue issues. In KP, the development budget declined by 0.3% from last year to Rs318 billion. However, that does not account for the fact that, due to the cash crunch, actual spending this year was Rs98.5 billion less than the budgeted. Interestingly, almost Rs86 billion of the development allocation for next year is foreign-funded. Of the total, around Rs39 billion in development funding is for education, including Rs30.2 billion for elementary and secondary schools. This is a credible investment in tough times—300 new schools will be built, and 1,700-plus will see upgradation or uplift work. There is also work under way to improve the monitoring of schools with around 3,000 assistant-sub divisional education officers to be recruited to supervise government schools. Currently, one ASDEO monitors about 60 schools, which the government hopes to bring down to a more realistic eight-to-one ratio. Another Rs24 billion has been marked for health in the development budget, apart from a Rs18 billion allocation for water.

BUDGET (2020-21)



BUDGET (2020-21)



Balochistan

Balochistan has unveiled a Rs465.528 billion budget, with a deficit of Rs87 billion. Despite all of the factors, that 18% budget deficit is eye-catching. Realistically, it is hard to believe that at this time next year, the government will have gone ahead with such a large deficit. Remember, the federal government has already cut Balochistan's allocation by around 10%, and this figure could well rise. Also, it is worrisome that the eventual subjects of cuts would likely be the usual suspects—health and education. The provincial education budget is Rs64 billion, while

health has gotten Rs38 billion. Only Rs118 billion will be spent on development expenditure, another figure where actual spending will likely be curtailed as the year progresses. Around Rs8 billion has been earmarked for coronavirus and other disaster response, and another Rs3 billion for the post-coronavirus relief programme. While both provinces have put out ambitious budgets with well-intentioned investments in critical sectors, KP's seems to be more realistic, given the expectations of budget cuts.

AJK

BUDGET EXPLAINER

Here's how the fiscal deficit is calculated: the government expects to collect gross revenues of Rs6,573 billion, which comprises both tax and non-tax revenues. From this, Rs2,874bn are to be transferred to the provinces under the National Finance Commission Award. So net federal revenues are Rs3,699bn.

At the same time, the centre expects the provinces to run a surplus of Rs242bn, so this amount gets added to net federal receipts, which comes to Rs3,941bn.

Subtracting the total expenditure of Rs7,136bn from this amount then yields the fiscal deficit of Rs3,195bn, or 7pc of the GDP.

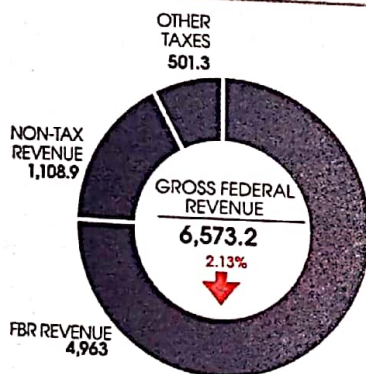
Small discrepancies of about Rs1bn might creep into the numbers due to rounding errors in budget documents.

Gross Federal Revenues
- Provincial Transfers NFC
+ Provincial Surplus
= Total Expenditures

DEFICIT: Rs 3,195bn

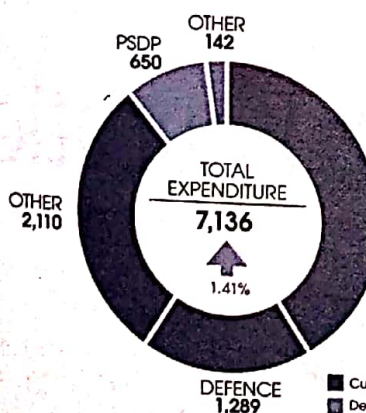
PROVINCIAL
SURPLUS
Rs 242bnNET FEDERAL
REVENUE
Rs 3,700bnTOTAL
RESOURCES
Rs 6,573bnTOTAL
EXPENDITURE
Rs 7,136bn**BUDGET AT A GLANCE**

(Rs in Billion)



Last year (billions)

FBR revenue (budgeted): 5,555
FBR revenue (revised): 3,908
Non-tax: 894
Other: Rs 267



Last year (billions)

Debt service: 2,891
Defence: 1,153
PSDP: 701

Current Expenditure 6,345 billion
Development Expenditure 792 billion

DEFICIT Rs3,195 bn

Image Courtesy: Dawn

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) budget for the fiscal year 2020-21 has a development outlay of Rs24.5 billion, same of the current fiscal year showing the total volume of Rs139.5 billion without any deficit. The total income for the fiscal year 2020-21 has been estimated Rs115 billion compared to the current fiscal years estimate of Rs97 billion which shrunk to Rs94 billion in the revised estimates of current fiscal year presented in the house.

The current expenditures for the coming fiscal year are estimated Rs115 billion same as estimates of income and the development expenditures of Rs24.5 would be provided from federal government in the form of grants. The government itself would collect Rs28.5 billion out of which Rs20.6 billion in the head of income tax and Rs7.9 billion in the head of other taxes and share from FBR taxes is estimated Rs70 billion, Rs19.9 billion are estimated from the state revenue and Rs670 million in the head of use charges from the federal government.

In the head of current expenditure, a huge amount of Rs28.88 billion has been allocated for education department; Rs22 billion has been allocated for the payment of pension to retired employees, Rs10 billion has been allocated for health department, an amount of Rs16.524 billion has been allocated in the head of miscellaneous expenditures (grants) while Rs8.762 billion has been allocated for electricity department.

In the development expenditures, the biggest amount of Rs10.2 billion has been allocated for roads and communication network, more than Rs2.57 for education, Rs2.795 for local government and rural development, Rs2.155 billion for housing and physical planning, Rs1.7 billion for power development and one billion rupees for development schemes of health department. ■

Pakistan has observed a steady hike in the spread of Covid-19, which continues till this day. To halt the spread of the killer virus, a two-week closure of schools and universities in Balochistan and two-day closure of educational institutions in Sindh was announced. Afterwards, amidst the fast spread of coronavirus the federal government announced that educational institutions across Pakistan will remain closed till July 15. That's when the Higher Education Commission (HEC) sprang into action, and issued guidelines for colleges and universities whereby it advised universities to look for other solutions. The HEC recommended that universities should shift to online learning. Universities were given the choice also to declare the lockdown period as summer vacations. However, should the lockdowns due to coronavirus continues beyond July, universities must begin online classes and remote learning activities for students. With these instructions, the HEC also announced that technologically equipped universities can begin remote learning as soon as they are ready, whereas other universities should prepare themselves and their teachers, and also develop paraphernalia for remote learning.



During the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the dispensation of formal education is something that must not be halted. Higher education, in particular, can

instil in our youth the responsibility to play their decisive role in bringing Pakistan out of this hard-hitting situation. Realizing this need, the Higher Education Commission (HEC), the regulatory body of universities, immediately issued guidelines whereby it exhorted universities to move on to online education while taking into account their respective capacities and available infrastructure.

The six prerequisites for launching online classes by any university were: availability of the Learning Management System (LMS), trained faculty for online teaching, course readiness concerning the online mode of learning, availability of course material on the web, technological readiness, i.e. the platform through which the classes can be arranged, and last but not least, students' readiness to learn online.

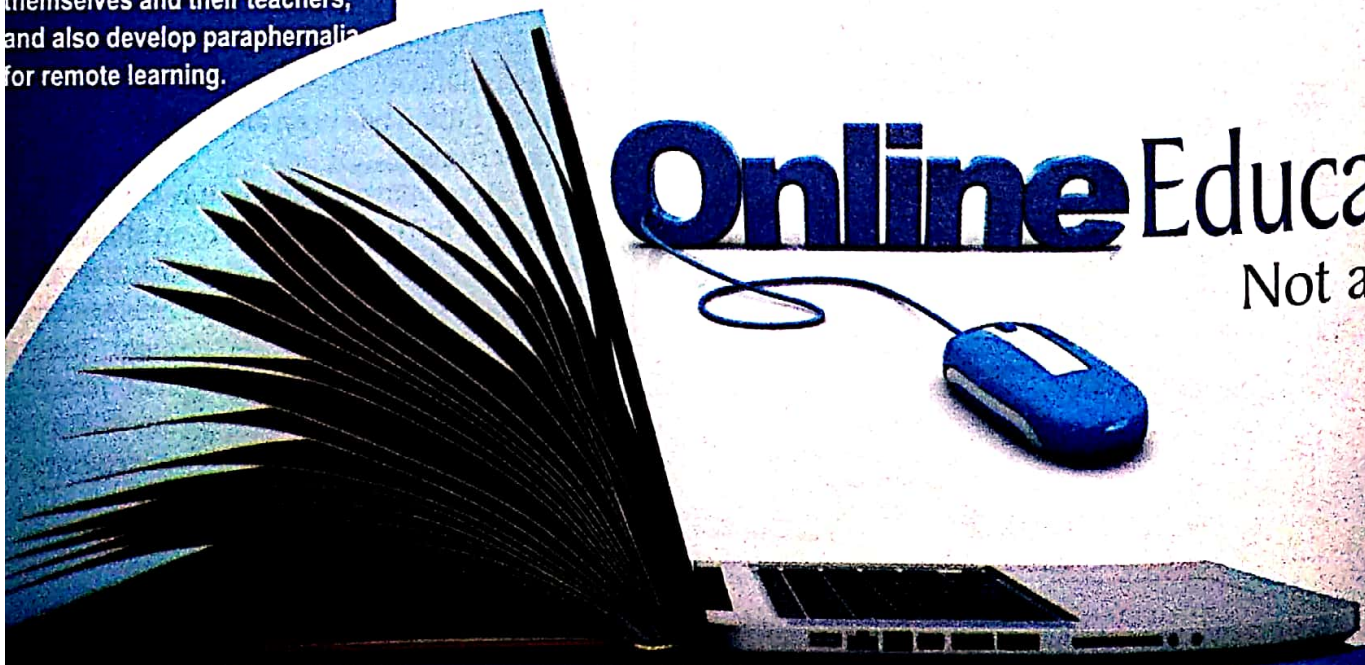
To resolve the technical issues in far-flung areas of the country, options like arranging unified online teaching platform for universities, negotiating Taleem bundles, development of lectures in blended modes and establishing student-facilitation committees were considered. The HEC also directed that if institutions remain closed beyond July, the universities must continue online education and adapt to the

admissions process as well. The HEC issued guidelines for universities to conduct remote learning and formed a technical support committee to aid them in switching to that. It also established a national knowledge bank that institutions can access for teaching material including curricula, textbooks, and links to digital libraries, lesson plans, video lectures, presentations, exam questions and quizzes. The commission also announced that a list of recommended online tutorials on skills and competencies required for good-quality online education will be made available for teachers across the country. However, despite all these initiatives, online learning is rather a new concept in Pakistan and it may face many challenges in the near future. To analyze these challenges, the first step is to factor in all the stakeholders—students, faculty, educational institutions, regulatory bodies and the government. The challenges being faced by all of them collectively are multi-faceted and can be broadly classified as societal, technical and regulatory. Most of the challenges are related to our behaviours and societal limitations.

To begin with, the lack of acceptance for online education by students and the general suspicion among parents about using gadgets for education and learning purposes seem uncalled for. Similarly, lack of individual space at homes in joint family systems—for families where parents and children both need to work and study from home

Online Education

Not a casual joyride



respectively—and the unfriendly atmosphere is a serious challenge.

Moreover, our non-disciplined lifestyle and lack of focus during e-learning further alienates the students from taking online classes. While the less attention span for online learning is a reality, people's shyness from e-learning and being camera-conscious are also practical issues being faced by students as well as teachers.

Another important challenge is the lack of tolerance towards technical issues and expressing rage on frequent connectivity disruption, interruptions, etc. The lack of awareness about digital learning ethics has worsened the situation.

Students criticized the moves in the wake of the issues stemming from quality of signals as well connectivity issues in many areas but just like any other transformation, developing the capacity of the institutions will take time. As the end of the pandemic is still not in sight, the motive is to save the education cycle from any disruption and this transition is worth struggling. Necessary steps are also being taken by the HEC to address the quality-related concerns during the online classes. (Recently, the Tele School channel was launched by Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, to keep the students associated with their education through dedicated lectures for students of class I to XII. This initiative involved a lot of effort and must be appreciated as it will have far-reaching effects in the times to come for the education of our young students.)

Soon after some digitally-advanced universities began offering online classes, students started voicing concerns about online education, availability of internet, and fee structures.

Many students also submitted complaints to their respective university administration and the HEC. They demanded that the remote learning initiative should be halted and a semester break should be announced until the Covid-19 situation improves. They expressed anxiety about a flawed grading systems and classes that required practical work. Another concern raised by students was that the fees charged by most universities remained the same even though none of the on-campus facilities was being used and they weren't even getting the quality of education they get while attending classes physically.

The list of technical challenges is not long enough, yet the first issue is the unavailability of the internet in remote areas which makes the students living in these areas unable to benefit from online education. The bandwidth limitations across the country, with only a few exceptions, when combined with the increased usage burden on feeble internet infrastructure, add to the misery of the

students. Another challenge is the expensive high-speed internet and a set of challenges pertains to the government and the regulatory authorities. As the primary responsibility of ensuring quality education is on the shoulders of the government, the absence of a predefined policy for online learning is its fault. Perplexingly, the government and regulatory bodies do not seem to be on the same page. For instance, the government has issued a notification for the closure of universities while the regulatory body is encouraging online classes. This dilemma is causing immense trouble for the students at large. The dearth of clarity and paucity of reliable data for effective and timely policy decisions are a few more challenges that should be tackled for the future.

As every cloud has a silver lining, it is high time the government explored opportunities in these challenging



times. For a paradigm shift—from traditional teaching towards inclusively effective and equitable e-learning—some of the recommendations include the development of a standard and comprehensive policy for e-learning with the consensus of all the stakeholders. The equitable provision of technical resources, including computers, high-speed internet facility, and online teaching platforms to students as well as the faculties of all universities is imperative to ensuring best online learning. Moreover, asynchronous learning modes based on smaller duration lectures with offline viewing facilities, discussion forums and a redefined assessment method based on cognitive learning are the need of the hour. Last but not least, the training and skill-enhancement of the faculty is pivotal as they are the ones to steer this online education. Otherwise, a simple compromise, delay or disruption in education can put the careers of future generations at risk. ■

*The writer is a PhD Scholar (English Literature).
He can be reached at: hbz77@yahoo.com*

Just after the outbreak of the coronavirus, many countries having e-readiness have taken immediate steps to conduct

Judicial proceedings online. We, too, need to upgrade our justice system and push our courts into the digital age with intensive education and training in legal information technology. We have to move as quickly as possible from paper-based to digital processes to save time and cost whilst maintaining access to justice in the new context that we are facing. Like many other countries, the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), working remotely and communicating through digital platforms can also be a normal phenomenon in Pakistan.

Some Examples

Many countries are modernising their court procedures rapidly. Lord Justice Fulford (Investigatory Powers Commissioner, UK) opines: "In an era in which many people conduct a large part of their lives using some kind of an electronic device ... the judiciary has got to enable how we conduct cases to match the expectations of the

As they say 'In every crisis, lies an opportunity', the spread of coronavirus as well as the lockdown to curb it has offered us an opportunity to revamp our systems in various sectors.

However, the most important institution that can be revamped and reoriented is the judiciary. Since the lockdown has brought to the fore the utility of information technology in managing office works from home, the justice system in Pakistan can also benefit from this revolutionary development. The court proceedings in Pakistan may also be conducted via teleconferences, Skype and video hearings.

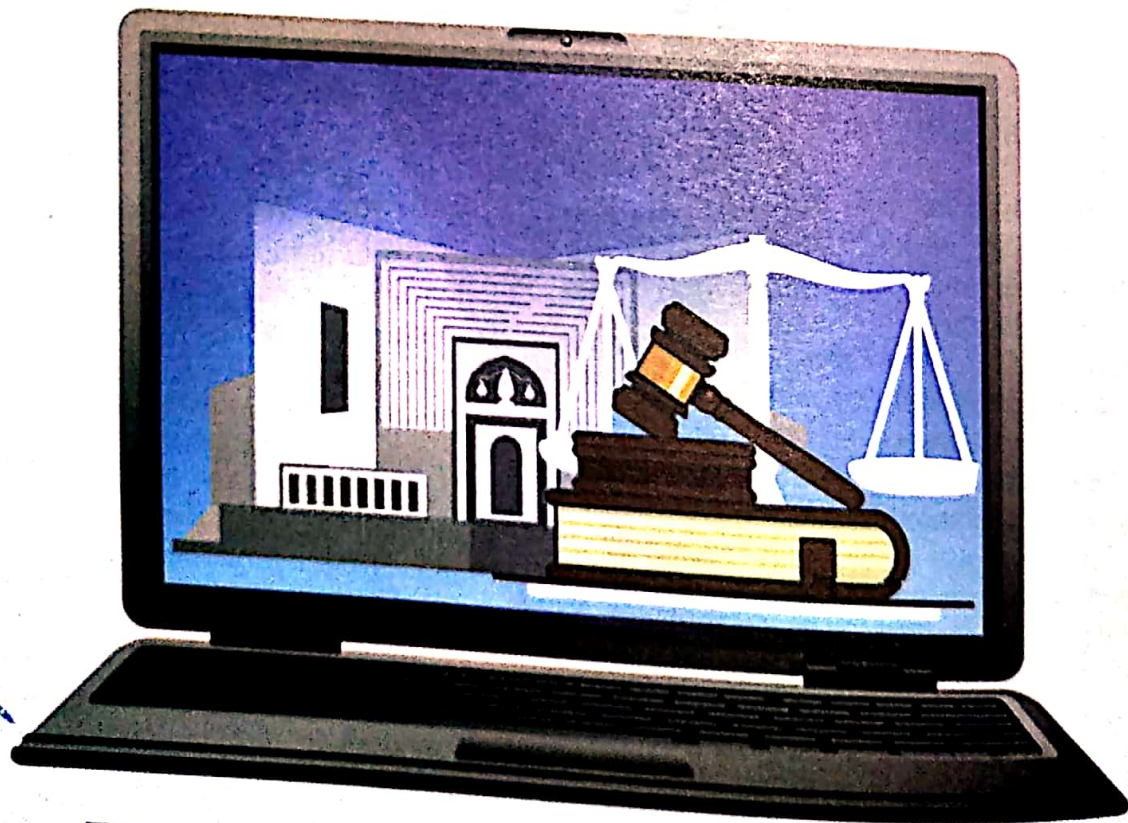
public." Worldwide improvements in e-dispute resolution provide examples for improvements in our justice sector as well.

1. The United States

In the United States, some courts such as the drug court of Davies County, Kentucky, have experimented with drive-thru operations before shelter-in-place orders were implemented. Other courts have been experimenting for decades with other types of teleconferencing and video depositions in lieu of live witnesses. Virtual courts are now the primary venue for the majority of legal proceedings in the United States. Harnessing technology and enhancing access to the judicial process have been two of the seven strategic issues of the US federal judiciary for over a decade. Some believe virtual courts are the way for the future as "more people in the world now have internet access than access to justice."

2. The United Kingdom

Once the crisis hit the UK, the Judiciary of England and Wales issued New Court Practice Direction 51Y (Audio Hearings in Civil Proceedings) and practice direction 51Z (Stay of possession proceedings and extension of time



Virtual Courts in Pakistan

Prospects and challenges

limits) for the duration of the Covid-19 period. Practice Direction 51Y, which (a) clarifies the manner in which the court may exercise its discretion to conduct hearings remotely in private; and (b) details what steps the Court may take to ensure access by the public to remote hearings that have been held in private. It also issued Practice Direction 51Z, which makes provision to stay proceedings for, and to enforce, possession, sets out that all proceedings for possession brought under CPR Part 55 and all proceedings seeking to enforce an order for possession by a warrant or writ of possession are stayed for a period of 90 days from March 27, 2020. Claims for injunctive relief are not subject to this stay. Where face-to-face hearings are essential, HM Courts and Tribunals Service has taken steps to consolidate the work of courts and tribunals into a small number of 'priority' buildings. Where face-to-face hearings are essential, HM Courts and Tribunals Service has taken steps to consolidate the work of Courts and tribunals into a small number of 'priority' buildings. A daily update of which court buildings are open is available online.

In a similar vein, the Court of Appeal has published a document which sets out how the Court of Appeal is currently operating—including prioritising only urgent applications in the Civil Appeals Office. In the United Kingdom, a considerable amount of work has gone into putting in place the infrastructure necessary to facilitate remote court hearings.

India
In India, on 6 May 2020, the Delhi High Court pronounced its first judgement through videoconferencing. It disposed of a writ petition that arose out of the fact of violation of a compliance advisory of the central government to wear mask in Covid-19 situation. The petitioners filed the writ petition under article 226 of the Constitution of India for quashing the criminal proceedings against them under section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Court dismissed the petition with directions that the judgment to be uploaded on the website of the Court within 24 hours and also to be forwarded to the counsels of the parties via email.

India started its journey towards an e-judiciary in 2005 by National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in the

Indian Judiciary prepared by the E-Committee of the Supreme Court of India. The Action Plan stated three phases to consider for implementation, i.e., Phase I: Initiation of ICT Implementation in the judicial system; Phase II: Coordination of ICT infrastructure for Judicial System; and Phase III: ICT Coverage of Judicial process from filing to execution and all administrative activities. Indian e-courts project revealed encouraging information about the use of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), which saved Rs340 crores to the country's exchequer, excluding the enormous recurrent cost of the license fee and maintenance, simultaneously providing the freedom to customise and use the system software.

3. Bangladesh

Bangladesh has also conducting through 2020. Bang

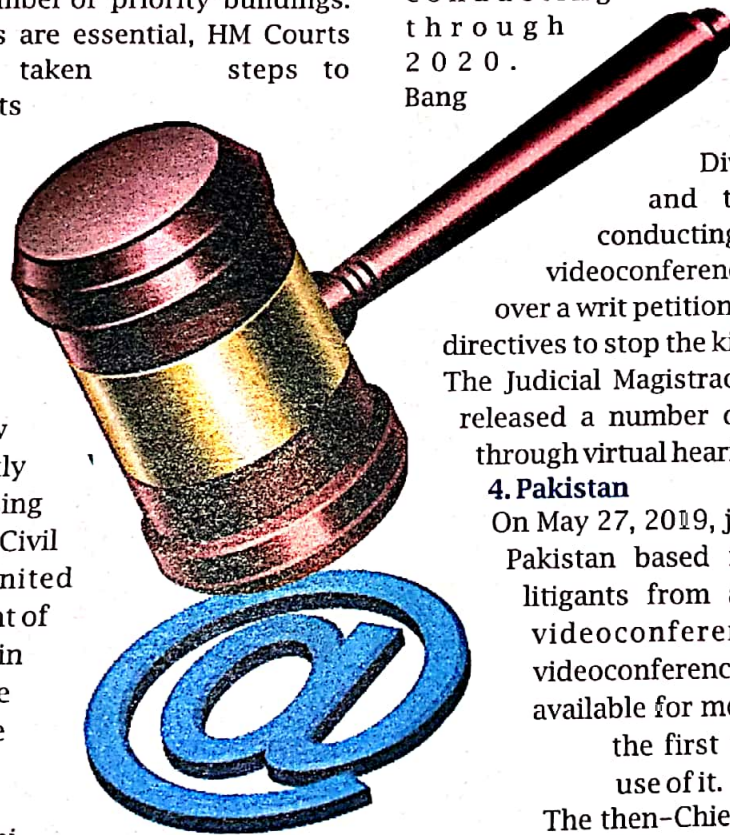
started its journey of judicial proceedings virtual courts on 12 May. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh issued practice directives for the Appellate

Division, the High Court Division and the subordinate Courts for conducting judicial proceedings through videoconferencing. In its first virtual hearing over a writ petition, the High Court Division issued directives to stop the killing of dolphins in Halda River. The Judicial Magistracy throughout the country has released a number of accused individuals on bail through virtual hearings.

4. Pakistan

On May 27, 2019, judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan based in Islamabad heard cases of litigants from all over the country through videoconferencing. Although efficient videoconferencing technology has been widely available for more than 15 years now, this was the first time our Supreme Court made use of it.

The then-Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr Justice Asif Saeed Khan Khosa, while hearing first case through the technology remarked that a big milestone has been achieved in the judicial history of Pakistan that cases are being heard through latest technology. The facility will benefit lawyers and litigants to save them time and money. Provincial high courts like the Peshawar High Court and the Lahore High Court have installed the facility of video link in distant districts to dispense inexpensive justice by facilitating lawyers from faraway districts to argue cases online and save precious resources and energy of counsels and litigants. They are being instrumental in times of Covid-19, especially when inter-district travelling is banned and lawyers from adjacent areas are unable to physically appear before the court. More recently, in April 2020, the Lahore High Court allowed lawyers to send their written arguments to the



courts. Today, in specified matters, the lawyers can send the brief of their cases/written arguments along with the relevant material to the court through mail or email at the principal and all regional seats.

Challenges

As easy and practical as it may sound, setting up virtual courts has its own challenges and "one size fits all" approach may not be suitable in this case. Not all countries are fortunate to have the required infrastructure for the easy use of videoconferencing technology, and therefore, they will not be able to take advantage of the same until and unless such technology is seamlessly embedded in its physical infrastructure. For example, apart from issuing practice directions, the relevant stakeholders will need to check whether such videoconferencing technologies are available to the relevant litigants at the said 'remote points'.

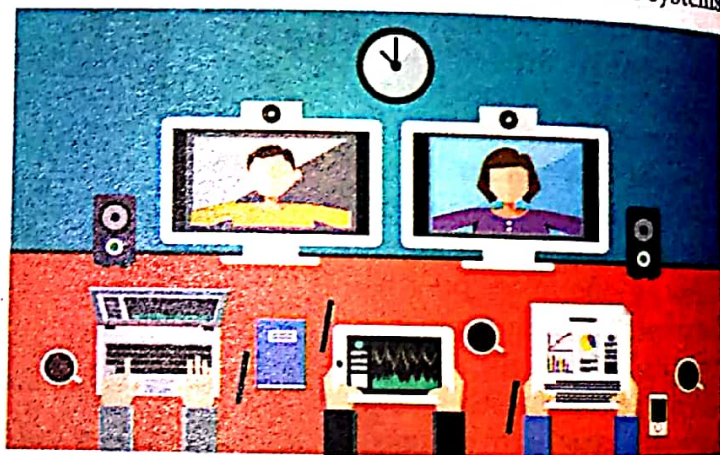


Also, special care needs to be given to confidentiality. There will always be a high chance that confidential information disclosed during virtual proceedings may be recorded by any of the litigants in their personal devices and used in other situations to the advantage of an unscrupulous litigant and/or made viral on the internet to the disadvantage of the innocent litigant.

Another potential difficulty may arise out of the absence of any special agreement with the software-provider which will supply the videoconferencing technology. The question that needs to be asked is whether the courts should use a software application without having any special agreement or engagement with the software-provider. Are the general terms and conditions of a software-provider sufficient enough to protect the privacy of the proceedings which may involve fundamental rights of the individual litigants concerned? Most of the small print 'terms and conditions' of the software-providers give them extensive authority to deal with data in such manner as they deem fit. In fact, the terms may be changed unilaterally, at any time, which would be binding on the users. For example, Zoom's privacy policy clearly states, inter alia, that 'We may transfer your data to the US, or third parties acting on our behalf, for the purposes of processing or storage.' This may not be appropriate for litigating cases where the litigants may not feel comfortable or wish that their data be stored by third parties and used at their own will—especially in this day and age where technology and information are closely linked.

The related temporary measures advised by the SC in the wake of Covid-19 are appreciable. However, to introduce long-term reforms, the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee—a body of all chief justices charged with bringing judicial reforms in the country—should establish an advisory board of leading experts in legal information technology and IT. This board should keep our justice system under constant review and advise on how it should be improved, particularly regarding online dispute resolution in civil and criminal cases. To facilitate buy-in from Pakistan's legal fraternity, Section 3 of the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee Ordinance, 2002 should also be amended to provide representation to national and provincial bar councils.

A pilot internet-based court service ('Online Court') should also be established to encourage digital justice. The lessons from this pilot project could be applied in other courts and tribunals such as civil courts, family courts and tax tribunals. The impact of such projects should, of course, be assessed, periodically, to upgrade our online processes and procedures. For example, the private data of citizens collected through online systems



must be strongly protected.

Conclusion

The concept of work from home is being successfully implemented in all sectors of work; the lawyers and their staff must also benefit from this trend. When e-classes, online work, telephonic advisories, Skype meetings, Zoom conferences and policymaking meetings through electronic means are becoming the norm of the day, our justice system must also not fall short.

In a nutshell, justice-sector reforms should provide increased access to e-justice, enabling citizens to get their disputes resolved more conveniently and quickly. Litigants should engage with online proceedings that ensure, first and foremost, procedural fairness. To do this, online procedures must integrate the role of judges and lawyers in a meaningful way. This will strengthen our justice sector and enhance the capacity of our country to meet the global crisis, including, in the first instance, the crisis growing out of our encounter with the Covid-19 virus. ■

Pakistan's **TAX** Policy Response to Covid-19 Pandemic



Bilal Hassan

Pakistan is a middle income country with GDP per capita of USD 1,497 during 2018-19. Revenue mobilization is almost 50% of its potential with tax revenue-GDP ratio of 13.9% and non-tax revenue-GDP ratio of 2.4% during 2018/19. With limited resources like other developing countries, Pakistan will be facing serious challenges in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although it is too early to sum up exact impact of the pandemic, the most-cited one is summarized below.

- significant contraction of GDP. The World Bank (WB) has estimated that the South Asian regional growth could fall between 1.8% and 2.8% in 2020, and that Pakistan is in a danger of experiencing a negative economic growth rate;
- ¼ national output is projected to decline in the range of 2.2% to 1.3% during 2019-20 by the WB, which implies significant reduction in per capita income;
- ¼ considerable reduction in job opportunities due to countrywide lockdown. Further, job losses in the oil-producing Arab and Gulf countries, which employ large Pakistani expatriate workers, will further add to rising problem of unemployment;
- ¼ significant decline in remittances. Pakistan's remittances will likely reduce due to shrinking job opportunities for the Pakistani expatriate workers around the world, particularly in the Gulf region as 2.6 million Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia have generated remittances between USD4.8 billion and USD5.9 billion over the last five years and 1.5 million Pakistani workers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) generated remittances between USD3.1 billion and USD4.3 billion during the same period;
- ¼ considerable decrease in exports, which will result in a steep drop in foreign exchange earnings and increasing unemployment;
- ¼ mounting debt burden of PKR41 trillion, which is 49% of Pakistan's GDP, will further add to challenges in coping with the Covid-19 pandemic as Pakistan will have to pay about USD40 billion as interest on its external debt during 2019 and 2023.
- ¼ escalating shortfall in tax revenue target and increasing expenditure will push fiscal deficit between 7% and 10% of GDP as projected by the WB. Pakistan's tax revenue collection is estimated to be

PKR1.65 trillion less than the original target of PKR5.555 trillion set for 2019-20.

In order to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on taxpayers, the tax authorities extended the deadlines for filing tax returns of sales tax and federal excise duty. Furthermore, deadline for payment of sales tax and federal excise duty was been extended to ease the financial burden and cope with the lack of cash flow of businesses and individuals as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. Detail is summarized below:

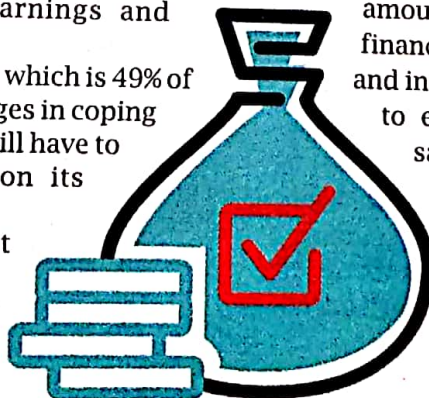
- ¼ the deadline for filing sales tax and federal excise duty tax returns for the month of January 2020, which was due by 18 February 2020, extended up to 15 April 2020;
- ¼ the deadline for filing of the sales tax and federal excise duty tax returns for the month of February 2020, which was due by 18 March 2020, extended up to 15 April 2020;
- ¼ the deadline for payment of sales tax and federal excise duty for the month of February 2020, which was due by 15 March 2020, extended up to 12 April 2020.

Furthermore, pursuant to Circular No.9(11)ST-LPE/Misc/2016 issued on 18 April 2020, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) extended the deadline for tax return filing and payment of sales tax and federal excise duty for the tax period March 2020. Detail is as under:

- ¼ the sales tax and federal excise return, which was due by 18 April 2020, was deferred to 30 April 2020; and
- ¼ the sales tax and federal excise payment, which was due by 15 April 2020, was deferred to 27 April 2020.

As a part of multi-billion rupees economic relief package, the government announced issuance of tax refunds amounting to PKR100 billion in order to ease the financial burden and lack of cash flow of businesses and individuals as a result of Covid-19 pandemic and to enable the businesses and industries to pay salaries to their employees in the prevailing emergency situation. For expeditious issuance of tax refunds, the following measures were adopted:

- ¼ establishment of a centralized system for online payments of income tax and sales tax refunds as well as customs duty drawback;



¾ the tax authorities were instructed to complete sales tax refund process before 20 April 2020 as well as to work out income tax refund amount after due adjustments; and
¾ strict monitoring of issuance of tax refunds for maintaining transparency and fairness;

Pursuant to amendments in the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 (ITO 2001), through SRO 300(I)/2020 of 10 April 2020 issued by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), any amount paid as donation to, or any income derived by the Prime Minister Covid-19 Pandemic Relief Fund 2020 (Covid-19 Fund), will be exempt from income tax. Furthermore, the following provisions of ITO 2001 will not be applicable to the Covid-19 Fund:

- ¾ Section 113: payment of minimum tax;
- ¾ Section 151: deduction of advance tax on profit on debt;
- ¾ Section 231A: deduction of advance tax on cash withdrawal;
- ¾ Section 231AA: deduction of advance tax on transactions in bank; and
- ¾ Section 236P: collection of advance tax on banking transactions otherwise than through cash.

The FBR issued the following SROs to reduce taxes and duties on import and supply of various food items during the period commencing from 7 April 2020 until 30 June 2020 for alleviating the adverse impact of Covid-19 pandemic on different sections of the society.

SRO 287 (I)/2020 that inserts new clauses (24CA) in Part II and (12C) in Part IV into the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Ordinance 2001 (ITO 2001).

¾ Clause (24CA) introduces reduced withholding tax rate under section 153(1)(a) of the ITO 2001 of 1.5% from 4.5% of the gross amount of payment in respect of supply of tea, spices, salt, dry milk, sugar, pulses, wheat flour and ghee, supplied to the Utility Stores Corporation (USC) by any person other than a company. However, clause (24CA) will not be applicable if tea, spices, salt and dry milk are sold under a brand name; and rate of tax under section 153(1)(a) of the ITO 2001 is less than 1.5% of the gross amount of payment under any other provisions of the ITO 2001; and

¾ Clause (12C) exempts persons importing pulses from payment of advance tax at the rate of 2% under section 148 of the ITO 2001.

SRO 288(I)/2020 that amends SRO 670(I)/2019 of 28 June 2019 to exempt additional customs duty on import of edible oil and oil seeds.

On 20 March 2020, the FBR issued the following Statutory Regulatory Orders (SROs) to exempt from duties and taxes the medical and testing equipments concerning Covid-19 outbreak for a period of three months commencing from the date of publication of these SROs:

¾ **SRO 235(I)/2020** to provide exemption from the

whole of the customs duty, regulatory duty and additional customs duty chargeable under the Customs Act 1969;

¾ **SRO 236(I)/2020** to provide exemption from deduction of the withholding tax on the imports under section 148 of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001; and

¾ **SRO 237(I)/2020** to provide exemption from the whole of the sales tax on the imports and subsequent supply under the Sales Tax Act, 1990.

On 17 April 2020, the President promulgated the Tax Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 (Ordinance 2020) concerning incentive package for construction sector announced by the Prime Minister on 3 April 2020.

The Ordinance will be applicable to new projects commencing before 31 December

2020 and existing incomplete projects in the construction sector. However, new and existing projects will require to be registered by filing a prescribed form on the IRIS web portal of the FBR.

Under the Ordinance:

- ¾ tax will be charged on the basis of square feet and square yard;
- ¾ withholding tax will not be charged on construction material except for steel and cement;
- ¾ withholding tax will not be charged on services except those rendered by companies;
- ¾ tax credit of profit/gains from a project up to 10 times of tax payment will be available;
- ¾ 90% tax liability will be reduced for low-cost housing projects of Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority;
- ¾ tax will not be charged on dividends paid to the shareholders by the companies;
- ¾ capital value tax (CVT) is exempted within the jurisdiction of federal capital;
- ¾ a reduced advance tax of 5% instead of 10% will apply on sale of properties;
- ¾ construction services within the jurisdiction of federal capital will subject to 0% sales tax; and
- ¾ one-time exemption from capital gains tax will be available on sale of personal accommodation not exceeding 500 square yards in case of houses and 4,000 square feet in case of flats; and
- ¾ capital investment made in a new project in the form of money or land will not be probed under the provisions of section 111 of the ITO 2001 subject to prescribed conditions.

The future will tell us whether these measures prove effective against socio-economic challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. ■

The writer serves as Additional Director Intelligence & Investigation (Inland Revenue) at the FBR.





Life on the Verge of Death

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to devastate the framework of life globally. This disease entered Pakistan on 26 February 2020 and has, by now, taken the lives of a few thousand people in all parts of the country in a short span of time. All medical workers are on the frontline like soldiers in the war against Covid-19. This is an invisible enemy also for health workers. Doctors, nurses, caretakers and paramedics are facing an unprecedented workload in overstretched health facilities. They are working in stressful and risky environment.

Hafsa Hassan

where majority of the people are already poor but Covid-19 is likely to cause an exponential increase in poverty rate. It is estimated that the poverty will rise from 24.3% to 29%—even the most terrible case scenario of 33.5% is also being projected. This pandemic also directly affects social interactions. Meetings, voting, debates, get-togethers, etc. are not taking place because holding them during the calamity is too risky. This means that the most basic forms of politics are on hold and it may weaken the nation.

Every now and then we come across the oft-repeated phrase 'national mood changes as the seasons change'. We are moved by a sense of sadness and dejection when the green grass turns brown and flowers wither. Pakistan is today standing on a crossroads; we need a strong vision to implement strict rules to control the spread of the disease. This problem must be tackled pragmatically; otherwise, our dream of a bright future will remain only a wish. As death is so terribly final while, life is full of possibilities. So, for a new tomorrow, for a new beginning, let's struggle hard, let's work together and let's pray together for a disease-free bright future.



Education has been equally affected by this pandemic; not all schools, colleges and universities were able to start, and continue, online classes. And, most students, too, did not have access to the internet

at their homes. Only a few universities are running their classes online. However, it needs to be understood that there is a great difference between attending classes physically and joining them online. Young kids and special students find it hard to concentrate fully on online educational tools as they were accustomed to the classroom environment. Hence, it is not easy for them to adapt to being online students. In a country like Pakistan, shifting to online education is not simple.

Pakistanis are not a tech-savvy nation overall, and it is the reason we are having problem in education sector after the pandemic caused a countrywide shutdown. Global value chain (GVC) has also been disrupted by Covid-19 which means imports and exports have been almost stalled. There are a huge number of private companies in Pakistan that rely heavily on the imports for running their business. Pakistan is an underdeveloped country

Fate of Populism in Post-Covid-19 World

Political trends had never been this synchronized until the turn of the 21st century when the entire world saw a whole new lot of politicians rising around the globe. These world leaders, labelled populists, gained more power in years to come. The 9/11, economic crisis of 2008, and the migration crisis of 2015 whipped fear and created wedges among people as well as peoples. These events provided fertile grounds for sowing seeds of unilateralism and prompting disdain for traditional democracies, bureaucracies, science, accepted protocols and existing system—the very characteristics of populism. Thus, mentioned crises became gateway for bolstering populism.

Fatima Razzaq

Once again, the home to almost 7.8bn human beings and numerous other species is hit by an unexplored and somewhat unknown virus, resulting in a crisis of the scale unheard in modern era. Whereas previous crises strengthened populists every time, this crisis has divided historians and intellectuals over the fate of populism. First camp sees populism crumbling in the

near future and its members are exploring and exposing its limits. The other camp comprises those who expect this political trend to gain more strength and continue in post-Covid-19 world with even more ardour. Ones belonging to latter group are paying much attention to the similarities between the reasons and impacts of this crisis and that of previous ones which typically ushered populist thought.

Before assessing the fate of populism in post-Covid-19 world, it is pertinent to brush up few concepts like understanding populist thought and knowing the reasons and ways crisis situation leads to populism. It is also essential to analyze and compare efficacy of state-level responses—approved by different populists and non-populist world leaders—in the wake of current virus outbreak. Finally, it can be investigated that how different aspects of populism will be weakened or strengthened in this virus-hit world.

To understand the populist thought thoroughly, it must be made clear that terminologies like populism and populist are not strictly defined. But these terms mostly have negative connotations—the way capitalism and communism had been used since Bolshevik Revolution by contending blocs. Anyhow, in "Populism: A Very Short Introduction," Cas Mudde gave most acceptable schematic of populism in a scientific manner. According to Mudde, populists see their society being separated into two antagonistic groups—the "Pure People" and "The Corrupt Elite". The former group sees the latter as the reason for various social as well as economic ills. This division and grouping could be at national, international or any other level. Similarly, reasons for this division could range from social class to religion to ethnicity. This is very much in accordance with the "versatility," Professor Nadia Urbinati of



Columbia University has recognized with the phenomenon of populism. This discussion infers that populist agenda can be furthered in an environment where lives and livelihoods of one section of a society are endangered by other section. Mainstream politicians seem oblivious to this situation and then populists come forward vowing to take measures to allay fears of pure people. Moreover, social experimentation has revealed that populist leaders are generally anti-liberal; promote anti-elitism; disregard science; disdain traditional democracies, accepted manners, protocols and pluralism; and tend to make direct contact with their people carrying bundles of false promises. Different crises endanger different aspects of life and thus raise different kinds of populist thought. Populist leaders cash this fear in their rhetoric to fuel the fire and create wedges among people. For example, first major crisis of the ongoing century, i.e. the 9/11, made Westerners fearful of Muslims and indicated a rise of populists on both sides of the Atlantic. For this anti-Muslim and anti-Islam propaganda, "Clash of Civilizations" provided theoretical base to Western leaders. Similarly, 2008 financial crisis divided people on the basis of social class where economists, policymakers and bankers were held responsible for all the economic problems. Financial insecurity and frustration gave way to the rise of populists of the kind who promised fixing economy in all aspects. Anyhow, immigration crisis made public forget this genre of populists when they looked around to find more inward-looking, anti-immigration leaders. Though, purpose remained the same—saving jobs for working-class. Thus, different crises, one after another, set the stage for newer kinds of populism every time.

But, is just a crisis enough to trigger rise of populism? NO. Instead, prevalent global economic and political systems play undeniably huge role. For example, globalized capitalist world brought ills of uneven wealth distribution and threat to cultural identity. Mainstream political leaders paid little attention to these issues or they had no concrete plans to tackle these problems. Rising concerns among working class created dividing lines in a society where business and working classes stood poles apart. Anyhow, dawn of the financial crisis (2007-08) strengthened this division. In such situation,

to get into higher echelons of power, populist leaders used tools provided by democratic system, e.g. freedom of speech and public representation. So it was not just crisis but conditions created by existing system that heralded arrival of populism.

Now, let's analyze if coronavirus outburst has made the environment suitable for rise of populism or not. Populists hate democratic setups, bureaucracies and constitutional institutions. They like authoritarianism which allows taking actions swiftly, and mobilizing huge resources without any resistance. In post-Covid-19 world, these aspects of populism are more likely to be favoured. This point can be validated by comparing actions of different democratic and non-democratic governments to save their nationals from coronavirus. China, despite being the origin of coronavirus, controlled the situation in an effective manner. Brutal but effective lockdown, which was later extended

for whole Hubei province of 50 million, placed 11 million Wuhan residents in quarantine. But supply of food and other essentials was ensured during the lockdown period. Effective healthcare measures were also taken by building hospitals overnight and sending over 42,000 doctors and paramedics to Hubei province. On the other hand, world's largest democracy, India, responded to this crisis in a poor manner by not enacting any support system and putting the responsibility of spread of virus on the most vulnerable of their society. And when Modi-led government ordered nationwide lockdown on 24 March for

21 days, states sealed their borders, businesses were closed and Indians were barred from moving. According to The Guardian, around 120 million rural-to-urban migrants took to the roads with their kids tied to their backs and domestic stuff bundled on their heads. To add salt to injury, even grocery and medical stores were not allowed to open. Comparison of policy measures, adopted by democratic-India and authoritarian-China in the wake of virus outburst, will bolster political stance of populist and help them bring forward in political arena. Moreover, chances of social unrest and violence are looming amid this crisis, as UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, has warned. These social problems will also compromise performance of democratic system and bring a tinge of authoritarianism into administrative setup while boosting populist ideology.



In addition, populists prefer unilateralism and virus outbreak seems to rupture multilateral system which stood at the heart of liberal system. This crisis has the potential to affect the mechanisms of cooperation and interdependence among world nations negatively. For example, after virus wreaked havoc in some European countries and weaker South asked frugal North to join hands to create corona-bonds, a clash of interests was observed among Eurozone finance ministers. Italian prime minister went as far as to say "If we do not seize the opportunity to put new life into the European project, the risk of failure is real." This indicates vividly that cooperation blocs could be hurt amid this crisis. Threat has not faded yet and existence of the EU will be threatened again and again after this epidemic is over.

IMF chief has warned that global economy is less likely to recover fully in 2021. Moreover, war-torn Arab and African nations will plunge into a new cycle of extreme poverty. In such scenario, many Arabs and Africans will try entering Europe, and Europeans would do everything to keep them out. Intra-Europe disputes over entry and distribution of refugees will also arise. So, it is highly predictable that more nationalist, anti-immigrant and inward-looking forces will arise, not just in Europe but throughout the world. In other words, amalgamation of different crises in post-Covid-19 era is predictable which will accompany a heightened wave of populism.

Populists also target international law and legal institutions as major tools for exploiting common people at the hands of global elite. Covid-19 seems ready to weaken, if not destroy, many important Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs). For example, integrity and role of WHO stands challenged after President Trump blamed it for being too deferential to China. Mr Trump also complained that despite the fact that China suppressed information about coronavirus outbreak, WHO is praising China for its arrangements and policies for tackling the situation.

Blame game amid this crisis and emerging bipolar world order will weaken IGOs further in days to come. Moreover, people will lose their trust in these multilateral organizations.

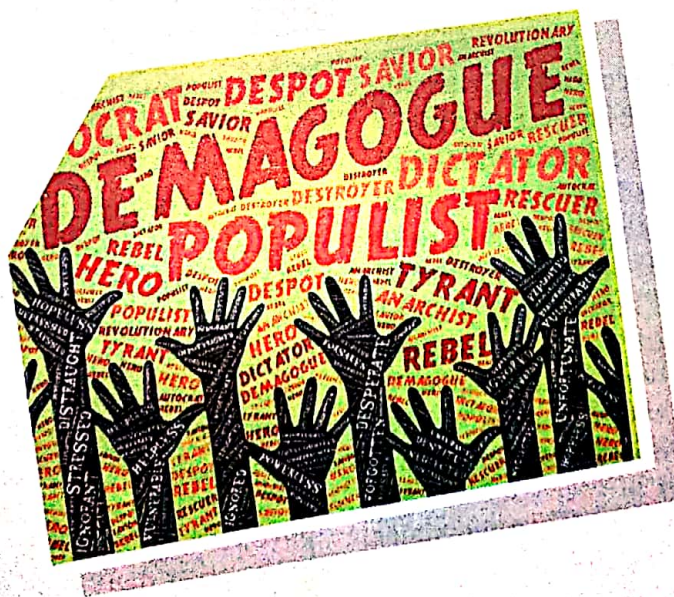
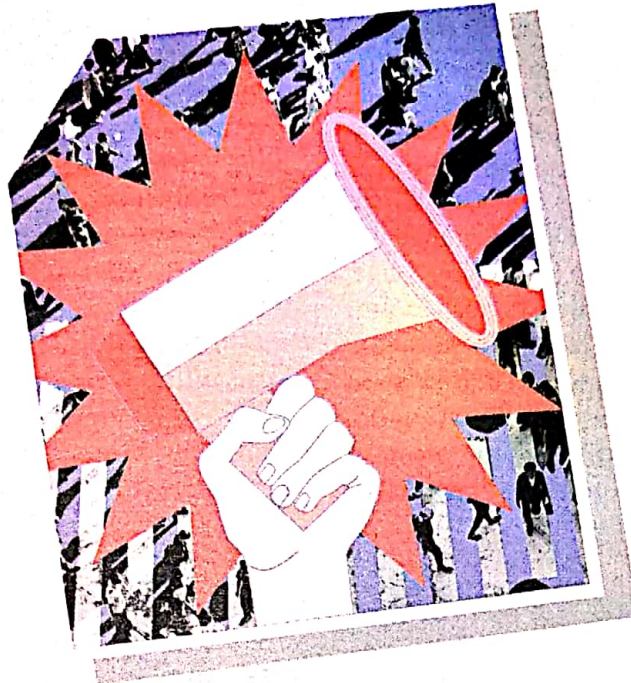
So, those politicians will have higher chances of winning state offices who vow to take matters in their own hands totally, instead of taking policy directions from IGOs. This also infers that in post-Covid-19 world, more inward-looking, populist political class will gain strength.

Cas Mudde's definition of populism tells that creation of two antagonistic groups lies at the heart of propagation of populism. So, it is imperative to see if two antagonistic groups are generated after coronavirus outbreak to push populism ahead or not. Currently, one can't find a definite party to hold responsible for the outbreak and

spread of this deadly virus; so, "corrupt" and "pure" people can't be identified. Instead, a multi-directional blame game has ensued; world is made to hear a long list of conspiracy theories. That's why, anti-Chinese, anti-Asia, anti-migrant and multiple other feelings are noticed after virus outbreak and no two definite sides are identifiable until now. These feelings have been demonstrated by American, European, and British public when they started attacking immigrants, Asians and people of Asian descent accusing them for spreading coronavirus. Political class of the two most powerful nations has also

contributed to this spat but without bringing the world close to any conclusion regarding the culprit. Moving away from USA-China blame game and considering state-level scenario, different victim parties can be identified in different countries. For example, Muslims are blamed and harassed in India on the account of spreading coronavirus. But this narrative is not appreciated by international media and world leaders. So, until now, no specific community, nation or ethnic

group has been accused worldwide for spread of Coronavirus.



While pole creation hasn't taken place until now, we need to see if this is going to happen in near future or not. For this, world order and foreign policies of world powers at the time of 9/11 are to be compared with that of now. At the time of 9/11, Western world was united and they had prepared their public psychologically to stand against "Islamic Civilization," as Noam Chomsky opines. Russia also pledged to back USA on this issue and, in fact, President Putin was among first foreign leaders to talk directly to President Bush. Same was the case with China which sided with USA against Taliban. As all regional and global powers of that time were on the same page, voluntarily or forcibly, one narrative was furnished and adopted. This is why after 9/11 anti-Muslim sentiments precipitated very quickly and poles were created soon after Twin Towers were hit. Contrary to this scenario, coronavirus outburst has created rifts among western countries on the issue of funding, policing and role of international organizations like WHO. Moreover, at global-level analysis, China and USA—both comparable in economic and political power—stand in contending blocs now. Both are trading barbs and blaming one another for the creation and spread of coronavirus. So, this division among Western nations and confrontation of major powers in political arena will hinder consolidation of one universal narrative regarding creation and spread of this virus and thus formation of contending groups.

It has been seen that coronavirus outbreak has made the conditions ripe for fungal growth of populism but it is also necessary to know the performance of existing populists, and thus the fate of populism. For the purpose, overall governance and legislation, policymaking amid crisis and its results need to be gauged. While different world leaders decided to fight against a common foe differently, neglected healthcare systems of populist regimes stung them badly. For example, Covid-19 could have wreaked little havoc in USA if Obama's 'Affordable Care Act' (ACA) would have been fully in place. Populists always put business and defence on priority list at the cost of social safety nets. Moreover, differences between the Centre and the States or Provinces are not surprising in populist-led countries. Populists, holding higher offices in federal governments, could not coordinate strategically with state/provincial governments leading to discords. These discords, verily,

hampered smart and swift actions after virus outbreak. Downplayed threat of virus (e.g. Brazil), delayed responses (e.g. USA), and declarations assuring their fellow nationals to be disease-resistant (e.g. Mexico) worsened the situation. On the other hand, many non-populist leaders took strict and painful measures in time to dodge more dreadful circumstances. For example, New Zealand announced state of emergency on 25th March and imposed lockdown on 26th March when there were just 205 confirmed or probable Covid-19 cases nationwide. On the other hand, Italy's nationwide lockdown began on 9th March when tally of Covid-19 patients had crossed 9,000. So, it can be said that delayed response and inefficient governance strategies of populist leaders after virus outbreak exposed their reality and that of populism also.

From the discussion, it can be concluded that in post-Covid-19 world, populism will strengthen its foothold.

Democracy is less likely to be considered the best form of governance. Economic and political issues will encourage nationalists and unilateralists. Social problems will push governments to take authoritarian actions. Mechanisms of inter-state cooperation will also be affected. Anyhow, as two globally recognized antagonistic groups, in the wake of coronavirus outburst, are missing, any universal populist agenda is less likely to be adopted. In such a situation, the fate of populists is to be decided at national level. Each individual populist

will formulate his own rhetoric and buy faith in accordance with local situation. If this happens, upcoming populists will have ideologies conflicting with one another. They will not praise one another the way it had been done just before the virus outbreak. For example, Trump praising Boris Johnson or Matteo Salvini wishing to become Italy's Trump. And so Urbinati's versatility will be experimented in space for the first time at a large scale. In post-Covid-19 world, conditions are good for the growth of populism. So, media and mainstream politicians need to accept the challenge of not letting populists takeover the system further. They can expose flawed governance of populist leaders after virus outbreak. They should not deny new problems arising after this crisis. Instead, they should formulate and present practical strategies for these problems and ensure unbiased talk on media. ■



Despite having been through a long quest of motley waves, has feminism compassed its purported mark of gender equality in Pakistan? Ever since its independence, this beloved country of ours has been toiling to meet women rights and to bring womenfolk to the fore—making them empowered. Knowingly, feminism now is in its course of new waves during which beaucoup achievements regarding women rights in the form of women-friendly legislation and policies have been accomplished. In spite of that, it still is battling in the face of multitudinous impediments to win the bout on behalf of women.

Faridullah

Feminism, to quote Merriam Webster, is the “belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities.”

It endeavours for social, political, economic and intellectual equality between the sexes. Bell hooks, a prominent American author and feminist, in her book “Feminist Theory: From

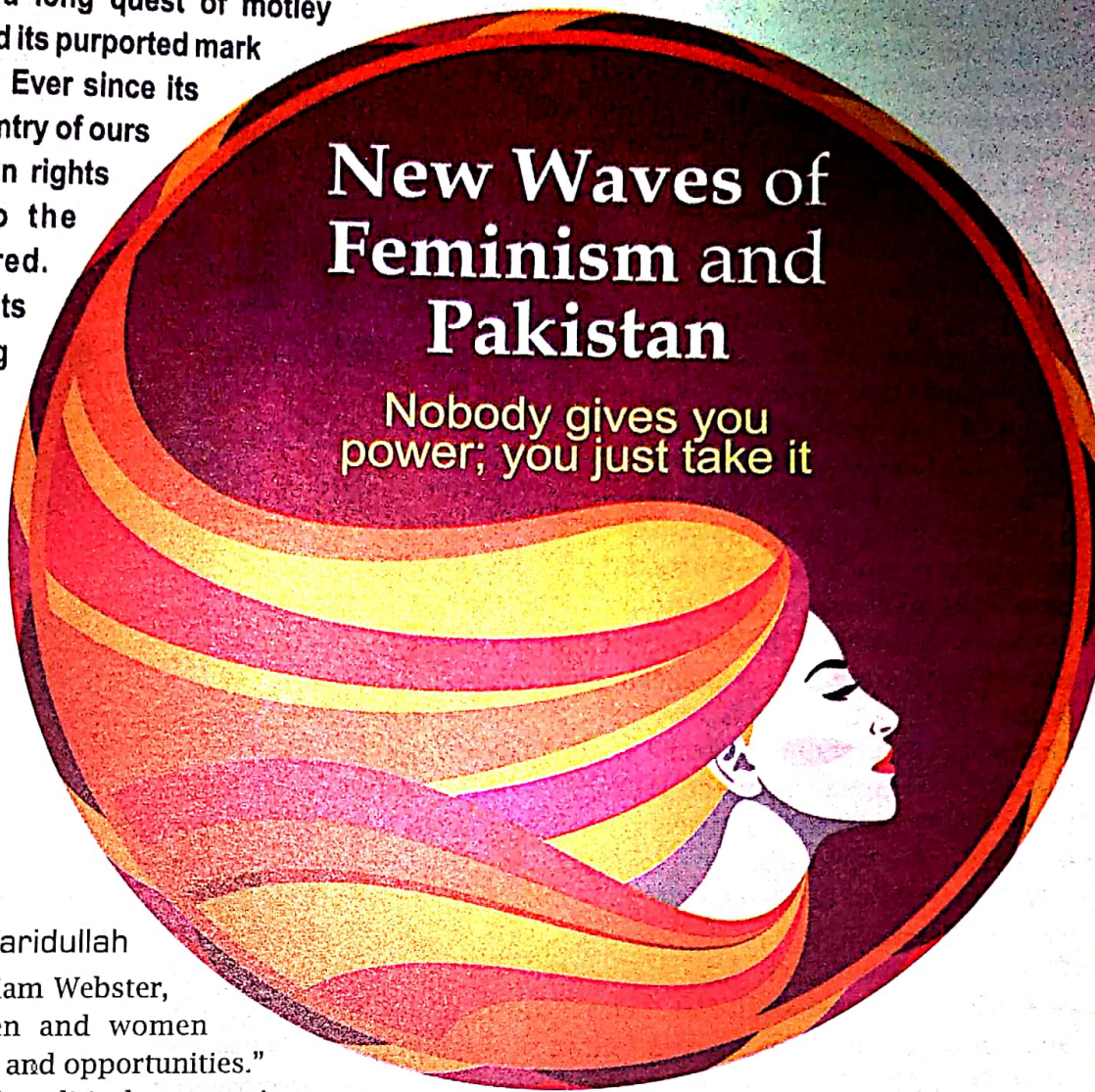
Margin to Center” calls feminism “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression.”

Knowingly, women have experienced subordination, discrimination and oppression over the years. Thus, feminists dare to challenge this status quo and want to change it in favour of women, equal to men. Consequently, feminism advocates for women's legal rights (right to contract, to own property, to vote); right to bodily integrity and autonomy; reproductive rights (including access to contraception and prenatal care); protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; workplace rights (including maternity leave and equal pay); and many other such rights of the womankind.

Historically, feminism has been through a long way, aiming to uplift women's status in society and to give them equal rights. Depending on demanding nature of women's rights, the feminist movement has been through various periods, called the waves of feminism which help us differentiate between movements with motley

New Waves of Feminism and Pakistan

Nobody gives you power; you just take it



pur

poses and characteristics of women rights movement. Chronologically, the history of feminist movement is divided into four waves: first, second, third and fourth wave of feminism. These waves, although started in Europe and America, have impacted the status of women the world over.

To discuss new waves of feminism, the latest advancements in women rights—the third and fourth waves of feminism, in the context of Pakistan, it may be prudent to first have some prior knowledge about these waves. For an easy understanding of the third and the fourth wave, first and second waves, though not in the realm of the topic in question, are also enumerated succinctly hereunder.

To start with, first-wave feminism initiated in 1848 and lasted till 1920 when women were granted suffrage. In the beginning, the first-wavers focused on women's rights to vote, employment, education, contract and own property. However, they later primarily emphasized on women's suffrage, for which they are also called suffragists, because they thought political representation would be a panacea for all the problems women face. Though the first-wavers triumphed in gaining women suffrage, they could not mitigate the women's sufferings

at the hands of men, for which the second-wavers, after a short hiatus, came to the fore.

Second-wave feminism, which lasted from 1960s to 1980s, dealt with issues women were still faced with. It mainly focused on women's reproductive rights; protection of women against domestic violence, marital rape and sexual harassment in public places; equality in education; ending gender pay gap; personal identity of women; other legal and social rights

of women; and to end the stereotypicality of society that women are made only for domestic and aesthetic purposes.

The second-wavers, to become equal like men, had worked to somehow reject things peculiar to the muliebrity, e.g. makeup, high heels and high girliness. The second wave accomplished many of its targets; however, this disregard and other related failures led to the third-wave feminism.

The third wave, which started in the 1990s and is believed to have lasted till 2012, was a continuation of, and a reaction to, the perceived failure of the second-wave feminism. The third-wavers sought to reclaim ideas about sexuality, gender, beauty, femininity and masculinity, and fought for their rights maintaining their uniqueness of being femmes. They focused on issues like sexual harassment, sexual objectification, violence against women and reproductive rights, as well as on increasing the number of women in positions of power. Also, they included rights of all other marginalized communities that were previously left out by first and second waves, in their campaign.

Furthermore, the third-wavers emphasized on issues which appear to limit or oppress women; and demanded that free choice be given to women—whether she chooses homemaking or a professional career to be economically independent or both at the same time, having or not having children, choice of fashion and personal expression.

Virtually, all these demands were somehow met, but with the advancement of information technology and the advent of social media, the course of claiming women's rights has, somehow, if not completely, changed from strikes, speeches and street walks to digital pathways. Such revolution spearheaded to the fourth-wave feminism, which is believed to have started in 2012 and has continued its course



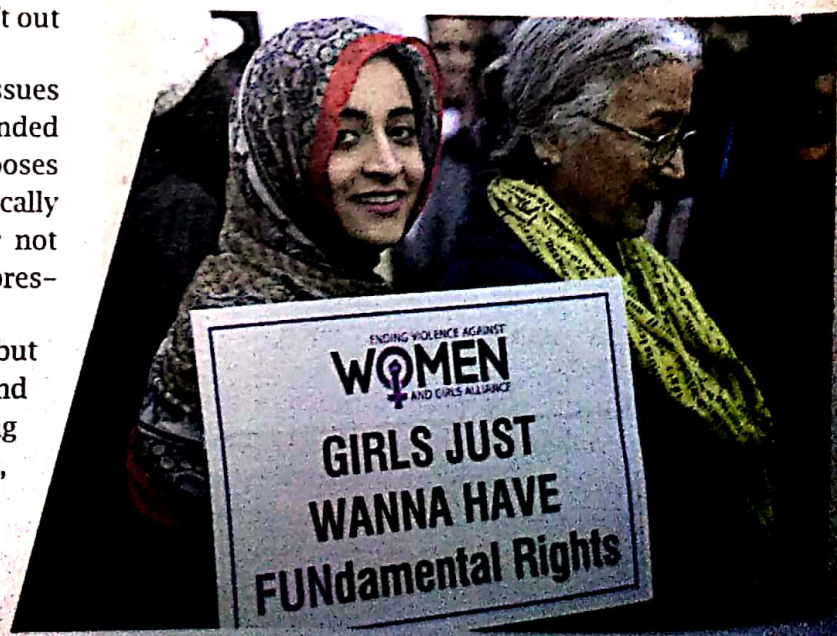
till this day. Prior to the fourth wave, not all women could participate in public debates due to cultural, economic and social impediments. However, with the growing use of the internet and social media, powerful tools of, and backbone to, the fourth wave, virtually every woman now can partake in feminist debates.

Although feminism, during its first three waves, had considerable achievements, it is still battling for, during its course of fourth wave, its unsolved issues such as sexual harassment, marital rape, reproductive rights; bodily

autonomy; equal job opportunities; gender pay gap; equality in education; equal political representation, greater representation in business; and self-expression. Fortunately, during this era of fourth wave, women are now more vocal for their due rights than ever before. Now they can independently raise voice for their rights by writing blogs and articles and using social media. Further, access to the internet has empowered women such that they can now buy things online, start online businesses and work from home, making it feasible to be a homemaker and a professional, simultaneously.

After discussing feminism and its waves in general, let's have an overview of feminism and the promises it made during its new waves in Pakistan.

Like all other countries, understanding of feminism has been low in Pakistan. It is completely a myth over here. Ever since the country's independence, women in Pakistan have been battling exploitative treatment at the hands of their male counterparts. Moreover, the social, economic



and political environment is making it difficult for them to progress and fight for their rights. There have almost always been some backlashes against women who wish to empower themselves be it by studying, working or even choosing a spouse for themselves. NGOs and other institutions that work to help oppressed women are accused of misleading and 'brainwashing' them. Most women internalize their sufferings either out of fear or lack of resources to resort to. Here, feminists are labelled as protagonists of Western culture.

Throughout its history, feminism has been enduring hard to gain women rights. Luckily, a number of advancements have been made during the course of new waves. Let's analyze these advancements in third- and fourth-wave feminism, respectively, in the following section. During third-wave feminism, the Government of Pakistan aimed at promoting

gender equality by involving women in all spheres of life. Besides, women enabled themselves to gain higher participation in socio-political and economic fields. They have secured their quota in local government departments, bureaucracy, media houses and parliament.

Unsurprisingly, during the government of Benazir Bhutto, feminism gained momentum when NGOs and other women rights organizations were given considerable power. They urged the government to make certain amendments to laws regarding women. Unfortunately, this momentum waned during the governments of Mian Nawaz Sharif and, resultantly, women soon found themselves losing grounds to political conservatism and religious revivalism.

However, gratefully, some lost grounds were reclaimed when Musharraf government rallied for women rights and encouraged their involvement in media, sports and other socio-political activities.

This struggle, albeit with lesser intensity than before, has continued to this day. Due to these and other such efforts, many women-friendly bills such as Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Anti-Sexual Harassment Bill, the Criminal Acid Act, Protection of Women Act, Status of Women Bill and other miscellaneous regulations condemning honour killing and other vices faced by Pakistani women were success-

fully passed.

Additionally, the Government of Pakistan recently has passed the Maternity Leave Bill which makes it mandatory to grant paid leave up to six months (six-month leave on first child, a four-month on second and a three-month on third child).

Though feminism in Pakistan has compassed landmark achievements during the third wave, many loopholes were also identified. For instance, the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill was passed unanimously by the National Assembly, but, due to apathy of the government towards women, the same lapsed after the Senate failed to pass it within the three-month period required under the constitution.

Similarly, the so-called sharia system of the Taliban in areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and erstwhile FATA also hampered efforts to women empowerment.

The so-called preachers manipulated women's freedom in the name of sharia. Girls' schools and colleges were attacked and demolished, and women were restricted to their homes in the name of *parda* (veil).

Moreover, feminism was labelled as a Western construct which deserves no place in the Islamic structure. Conservatives pretended that it

is tantamount to exploiting women in the name of feminism and giving them more responsibilities would increase the burden on them.

Likewise, in Pakistani parliament, women are still considered 'extra' and dealt as 'minority'. The disgusting incident, in which a PML-N lawmaker, Khawaja Asif, ridiculed his political rival Dr Shireen Mazari of PTI by calling her "tractor trolley," paints a dismal picture in this regard. This sadistic attitude, indeed, exposes status of Pakistani women.

With the emerging power of the internet and social media, feminism in Pakistan has been moving fast toward its targets. Due to *parda* culture in Pakistan, most women cannot freely participate in public debates. Women have almost been excluded from the public arena. In such a scenario, access to the internet enables women to speak for their rights. After all,



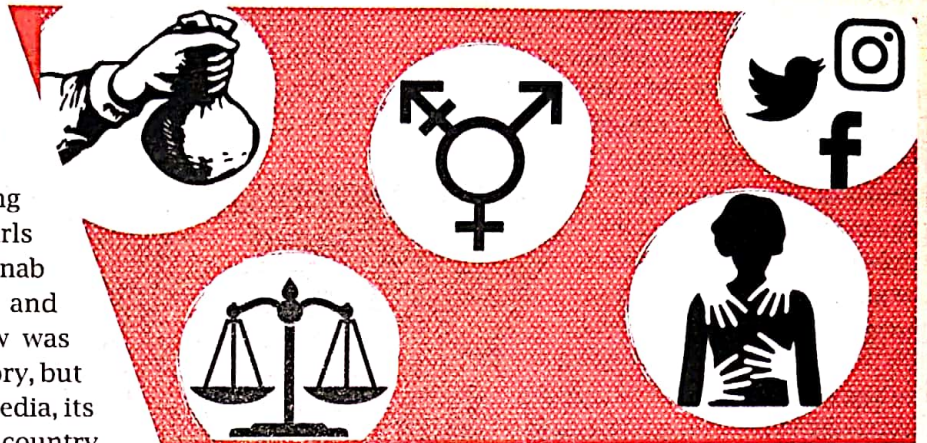
this is the peculiarity of the fourth-wave feminism. Knowingly, the internet is changing the very social fabric of Pakistan. Women, nowadays, can access almost everything online. Additionally, through the internet and social media, incidents of sexual harassment and rape are exposed to the public using hashtags, and pressure is mounted on government to take stringent actions against the culprits. For instance, when Zainab Ansari, a six-year-old girl from Kasur district of Punjab, was raped and ruthlessly killed, and her body was found dumped in litter, the feminists took to Twitter, Facebook and Instagram clamouring for justice for the victim. Such agitation compelled the government to the extent that the culprit was soon arrested, sentenced and hanged to death in record time.

Moreover, the recent agitation and exposing incidences of killing after rape of minor girls have compelled the parliament to pass Zainab Alert Law, a law regarding protection and rescuing of minor girls. Initially, this law was applicable only to Islamabad Capital Territory, but due to pressure from the public on social media, its jurisdiction was then extended to the whole country. Likewise, recently, Zainab Alert App's reporting system has been launched to help recover missing children—another step toward child protection using the internet.

Similarly, campaigns on social media and mainstream media against honour killing and acid throwing are also powerful tools to seek justice for the victims. For instance, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, in her documentary "A Girl in The River: The Price of Forgiveness" of a 19-year-old honour killing survivor girl, sensitized to the menace in Pakistan. This documentary has had such impact that after meeting with Chinoy, Nawaz Sharif, the then prime minister of Pakistan, promised to legislate on honour killing to prevent it. Furthermore, Chinoy also sensitized to incidents of acid attacks on Pakistani women through her Oscar-winning movie "Saving Face". Predictably, the impact of this movie was such that Punjab government immediately categorized acid throwing as a terrorist activity rather than an ordinary offence. Knowingly, social media has empowered women by giving them access to information and providing platforms to fearlessly demand their rights and ask for justice. In this

regard, the launch of Prime Minister Citizen Portal, an internet-based application, is a landmark step. On this portal, everyone, including women, can complain and record their grievances which are then addressed on urgent footings.

Though the internet has sped up the feminist movement during its fourth wave, still there are hurdles in digital pathways to women empowerment in Pakistan. For instance, women face cyber bullying, blackmailing, leak of personal information, cyber attacks, threatening mes-



sages and backlashes from the misogynist lobby. A survey conducted by Digital Rights Foundation of Pakistan recently found that 70 percent women fear of posting their pictures online because of potential misuse, while 40 percent have experienced threatening and harassment via messaging apps.

Similarly, Qandeel Baloch, a Pakistani social media star, was killed by her brother for posting 'objectionable' pictures on social media.

To cut long story short, feminism in Pakistan has been striving for equal rights and opportunities of women as well as other marginalized communities. Undoubtedly, major achievements and legislation have taken, and are taking, place throughout the new waves of feminism. It still faces challenges from chauvinists and misogynists, however. For now, the immediate priority for Pakistani women is to put on the government whatever pressure they can muster to persuade it to grant equal opportunities to women. That will be the route to women's self-realization in an environment of love, tolerance and peace. ■



1. In the first 30 overs of a cricket game, the run rate was only 6.4. What should be the run rate in the remaining 20 overs to reach the target of 225 runs?

- (a) 1.65 (b) 1.90
(c) 2.35 (d) 2.50

2. There were 8 students in a particular class. The class teacher knows the overall height of all the students in the class is 1300 centimetres. Can you find the average height of students in the class?

- (a) 152.5cm (b) 157.5cm
(c) 162.5cm (d) 165.0cm

3. In a class of 37, the overall weight of students is 997. Can you find the average weight of students in the class?

- (a) 25.75 (b) 26.95
(c) 27.15 (d) 28.35

4. Total marks obtained by a class is 1156 and the average score of the class is 68. Find the number of students in the class?

- (a) 14 (b) 15
(c) 16 (d) 17

5. In the first 30 overs of a cricket game, the run rate was only 8.2. What should be the run rate in the remaining 20 overs to reach the target of 289 runs?

- (a) 1.90 (b) 2.10
(c) 2.15 (d) 2.35

6. Find the average of first 30 multiples of 8.

- (a) 124 (b) 132
(c) 136 (d) 140

7. In the first 25 overs of a cricket game, the run rate was only 2.2. What should be the run rate in the remaining 25 overs to reach the target of 225 runs?

- (a) 6.75 (b) 6.80
(c) 6.90 (d) 7.10

8. The average of marks obtained by 40 students is 45. But after rechecking, marks of two students were corrected. After correction, if a student got 45 marks more and the other student got 15 marks less, then what will be the adjusted average?

- (a) 45.75 (b) 45.90
(c) 46.10 (d) 47.15

9. There were 15 students in a particular class. The class teacher knows the overall height of all the students in the class is 1400 centimetres. Can you find the average height of students in the class?

- (a) 92.65cm (b) 93.33cm
(c) 93.93cm (d) 94.85cm

10. There were 25 students in a particular class. The class teacher knows the overall height of all the students in the class is 1300 centimetres. Can you find the average height of students in the class?

- (a) 47cm (b) 52cm
(c) 54cm (d) 59cm

11. There were 17 students in a particular class. The class teacher knows the overall height of all the students in the class is 1400 centimetres. Can you find the average height of students in the class?

- (A) 79.65cm (b) 80.45cm
(c) 82.35cm (d) 90.75cm

12. Present ages of Samad and Adnan are in the ratio of 5:4. After three years, the ratio of their ages will become 11:9. What is Adnan's present age in years?

- (a) 20 years (b) 22 years
(c) 24 years (d) 26 years

13. The total of marks obtained by a class is 1152 and the average score of the class is 72. Find the number of students in the class?

- (a) 10 (b) 12
(c) 14 (d) 16

14. Six years ago, the average of a family of 4 members was 26 years. A child has been born, due to which the average age of the family is 24 years today. What is present age of the child?

- (a) 8 years (b) 10 years

- (c) 12 years (d) 14 years

15. The average weight of a class having 25 students is 32 kg. Find the total weight of the class.

- (a) 800kg (b) 850kg
(c) 880kg (d) 900kg

16. The average age of a group of 10 students was 14 years. The average age increased by 1 year when two new students joined the group. What is the average age of the two new students who joined the group?

- (a) 16 years (b) 18 years
(c) 20 years (d) 22 years

17. In the first 10 overs of a cricket game, the run rate was only 7.6. What should be the run rate in the remaining 40 overs to reach the target of 212 runs?

- (a) 2.90 (b) 3.10
(c) 3.24 (d) 3.40

18. The average of 24 numbers is zero. Of them, at the most how many may be greater than zero?

- (a) 20 (b) 21
(c) 22 (d) 23

Explanation

Average of 24 numbers = 0.

So, we have average = sum/24.

That implies sum = 0.

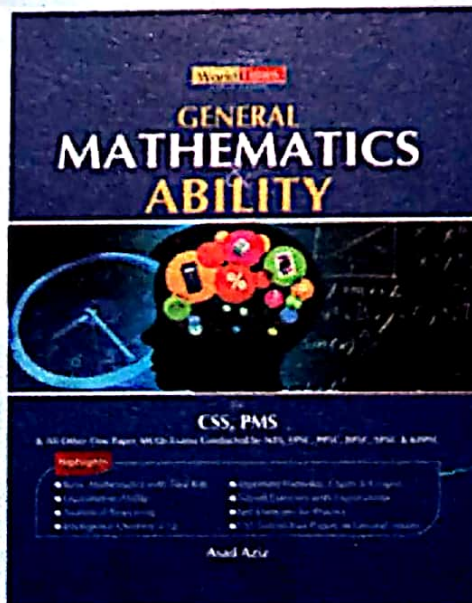
Now for the sum of 24 numbers to be equal to zero, there may be 23 numbers of them greater than 0 and only one number which is -ve of the sum of all 23 numbers. So the answer is 23

19. There were 17 students in a particular class. The class teacher knows the overall height of all the students in the class is 1200 centimetres. Can you find the average height of students in the class?

- (a) 70.59cm (b) 71.25cm
(c) 71.73cm (d) 72.13cm

20. The average age of a college is 21.8 years. If the average age of students of college is 24.2 years and average age of lecturers of college is 20.6 years, find the ratio of the number of students to that of lecturers?

- (a) 1:2 (b) 1:3
(c) 1:4 (d) 1:5



ADDITIONAL LOGO ALLOWED

- The ICC's Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) has also approved a relaxation of rules on apparel logos for the next 12 months.
- A logo, not exceeding 32 square inches in size, may be placed on the chest of the Test match shirt and sweater in addition to the three other logos allowed as per regulations.
- As of now, logos on chests are only allowed in ODIs and T20Is.

ADDITIONAL DRS REVIEW

- Each team will get an additional unsuccessful DRS review in each innings, keeping in mind that there may be less experienced umpires on duty at times.
- This will increase the number of unsuccessful appeals per innings for each team to 3 for Tests and 2 for the white-ball formats.
- The ICC Cricket Operations team will support Match Referees for Code of Conduct breaches. A neutral Elite Panel match referee will conduct any hearing remotely via video link.



ICC'S 'INTERIM' RULE CHANGES

COVID-19 REPLACEMENTS

- Teams will be allowed to replace players displaying symptoms of COVID-19 during a Test match.
- The Match Referee will approve the nearest like-for-like replacement.
- This will not be applicable in ODIs and T20Is.

NON-NEUTRAL UMPIRES

- The requirement to appoint neutral match officials will be temporarily removed from the playing conditions for all international formats owing to the current logistical challenges with international travel.
- The ICC will be able to appoint locally based match officials from the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Officials and the Emirates ICC International Panel of Match Officials.

BAN ON SALIVA ON BALL

- Players will not be permitted to use saliva to shine the ball.
- If a player does apply saliva, the umpires will show leniency during the initial period of adjustment but later, it will result in the team receiving a warning.
- A team can be issued up to 2 warnings per innings following which a 5-run penalty will be awarded to batting side.
- Whenever saliva is applied to the ball, the umpires will clean the ball before play recommences.

Line of ACTUAL CONTROL

With China's growing military presence at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), a 4,057-km porous border, running through glaciers, snow deserts, mountains and rivers, that separates India and China, tensions in the Himalayas have flared again in recent weeks, giving birth to a fear that the jostling could turn into an unintended full-blown military action.

Magazine Desk

Introduction

The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory. It runs at 15,000ft above sea level along an undefined border that stretches thousands of kilometers from Kashmir at one end, and Myanmar on the other. India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long, while the Chinese consider it to be only around 2,000 km. It is divided into three sectors: the eastern sector which spans Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, the middle sector in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and the western sector in Ladakh.

What is the disagreement?

The alignment of the LAC in the eastern sector is along the 1914 McMahon Line, and there are minor disputes about the positions on the ground as per the principle of the high Himalayan watershed. This pertains to India's international boundary as well, but for certain areas such as Longju and Asaphila. The line in the middle sector is the least controversial but for the precise alignment to be followed in the Barahoti plains.

The LAC is a lengthy international frontier with three main sectors—eastern (Sikkim), western (Ladakh) and central (Nepal)—each having peculiar legal features. The Indian position on border disputes is surprisingly contradictory in all three sectors whereas China has implemented a



consistent policy to assert the executive authority of its government over the chunks of land it claims all along the length of the LAC.

The major disagreements are in the western sector where the LAC emerged from two letters written by Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai to his Indian counterpart Jawaharlal Nehru, in 1959, after he had first mentioned such a 'line' in 1956. In his letter, Zhou said the LAC consisted of "the McMahon Line in the east and the line up to which each side exercises actual control in the west." After the 1962 War, the Chinese claimed they had withdrawn to 20 km behind the LAC of November 1959. Zhou clarified the LAC again after the war in another letter to Nehru: "To put it concretely, in the eastern sector, it coincides in the main with the so-called McMahon Line, and in the western and middle sectors, it coincides in the main with the traditional customary line which has

Table 1

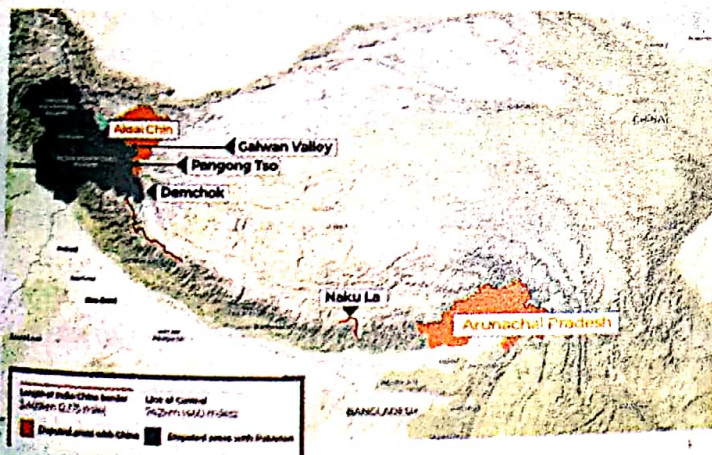
Year	Agreement	Flaw
September 1993	Maintenance of peace & tranquility along LAC No activities of China and India will overstep the LAC	These agreements are away from ground reality. There is no mention of the actual line location. There is no mention of line that separates deployment of India & Chinese troops
November 1996	Chalks out measures to build confidence in military field along the LAC Both sides to limit their military forces within the agreed geographical zones	
April 2005	Political Parameters and Guiding Principles	First three stages are complete and fourth one is ongoing. The 4th stage involves demarcation of boundary on map and ground
October 2013	Border Defence Cooperation	



consistently been pointed out by China." During the Doklam crisis in 2017, the Chinese Foreign Ministry

CHINA-INDIA Border dispute

India and China share 3,488km-long land border, most of which remain disputed.



spokesperson urged India to abide by the "1959 LAC".

Conflict-resolution Efforts

Small-scale clashes have not been unusual since 1962, when the two sides fought the Himalayan war over territorial integrity. Since then, Beijing and New Delhi have signed a number of agreements to avert any major escalation.

China and India have signed four agreements on this boundary issue. These agreements were signed in September 1993, November 1996, April 2005 and October 2013. India-China talks on border disputes are held on the basis of these four agreements. However, these agreements are considered flawed ergo unable to resolve the boundary issue between the countries. Have a look at the details of these four agreements in Table 1:

When did India accept the LAC?

The LAC was discussed during Chinese Premier Li Peng's 1991 visit to India, where the host PM PV Narasimha Rao and Li reached an understanding to maintain peace and tranquility at the LAC. India formally accepted the concept of the LAC when Rao paid a return visit to Beijing in 1993 and the two sides signed the Agreement to Maintain Peace and Tranquility at the LAC. The reference to the LAC was unqualified to make it clear that it was not referring to the LAC of 1959 or 1962 but to the LAC at the time when the agreement was signed. To reconcile the differences about some areas, the two countries agreed that the Joint Working Group on the border issue would take up the task of clarifying the alignment of the LAC.

Facts

According to the western sector maps-shared by India and China in 2002 on their respective claim line, there are 12 areas of differences in perception of the Line of Actual Control. The maps were never exchanged due to Chinese objections.

These are:

- Samar Lungpa: 176 sq km
- Trig heights and Depsang Bulge: 972 sq km
- Konh Ka La (3 pockets): 56 sq km
- Pangong Tso (Both banks): 83 sq km
- Spanggur Gap: 24 sq km
- Mount Sajum: 129 sq km
- Dumchele: 40 sq km
- Demchok: 150 sq km
- Chumar: 80 sq km

Difference between LOC and LAC

Line of Control (LOC)

The Line of Control (LOC) is a 450-mile-long military control line which serves as a frontier slicing the disputed Indian and Pakistani-governed parts of Kashmir into two. According to the United Nations, the LOC came into effect in July 1972 after India and Pakistan fought a war that began in 1971. They signed the Simla Agreement to define what was previously called the "Ceasefire Line." The LOC isn't a legally recognized boundary because it was meant to be a provisional international border which was agreed upon by both countries in the 1972 agreement.

Line of Actual Control (LAC)

Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the effective military border which separates Indian-controlled areas of Jammu and Kashmir from Aksai Chin. It is the effective border between People's Republic of China and India. It is nearly 4,057-km-long. It touches Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. This border is not a legally recognized international boundary, but rather it is the practical boundary. This term LAC got legally recognized during Sino-Indian agreements which were signed in 1993 and 1996.

The Nervous System and the Brain

The nervous system is a complex collection of nerves and specialized cells known as **neurons** that transmit signals to different parts of the body. It is essentially the body's electrical wiring. Structurally, the nervous system has two components: the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system which includes the nerves that extend from the brain and the spinal cord. The brain of an average-sized adult weighs about three pounds, yet the amount of information it contains is amazing!

M. Ali Jawad

Parts of Brain

The brain lies within the skull and is shaped like a mushroom. The brain consists of four principal parts:

1. **The cerebrum**—the large, upper part of the brain—orchestrates memory, thoughts and learned behaviour. The cerebrum's surface is called the cerebral cortex, and is convoluted—patterned with intricate twists.
2. **The cerebellum**—the underneath part of the brain—coordinates voluntary muscle action and balance.
3. **The brainstem**—the distal part of the brain that is made up of the midbrain, pons, and medulla oblongata—connects to the spinal cord and controls involuntary activities.

The cerebrum is divided into two hemispheres, or halves, which are connected by a communication bridge called the corpus callosum. Each hemisphere controls the actions of the opposite side of the body.

4. **The diencephalon**—the fore brainstem. It includes the thalamus and hypothalamus. The thalamus is where sensory and other impulses go and coalesce.

The hypothalamus is a smaller part of the diencephalon.

Other parts

Other parts of the brain include the midbrain and the pons:

- the midbrain provides conduction pathways to and from higher and lower centres; and
- the pons acts as a pathway to higher structures; it contains conduction pathways between the medulla and higher brain centres

In human brains and some animal brains, there are certain specific skills that are controlled by each hemisphere. In human brains, the left hemisphere controls temporal (time) judging skills, rhythm processing, mathematics skills and both spoken and written language skills. The right hemisphere controls pattern-matching, hand-eye coordination, facial recognition, non-speech-sound processing, and music skills. Logic or artistic ability can be on either side, depending on which skills a person is strongest in.

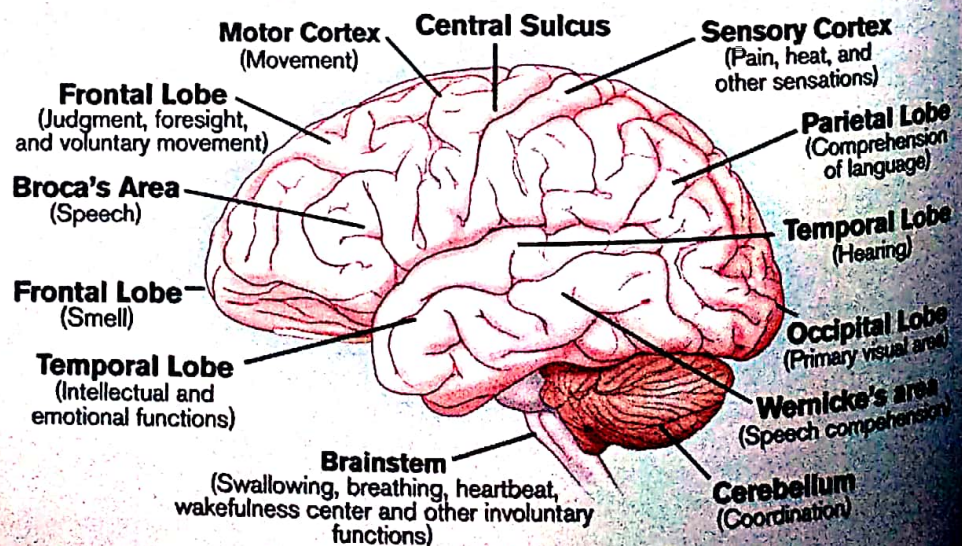
Experiments and research have been done which demonstrate where certain thought activities take place. The split-

brain phenomenon is an indicator of which skills are located in each hemisphere. Split-brain patients have had their corpus callosum severed, usually to cure epileptic seizures. This means that the two hemispheres can no longer communicate with each other. Research on split-brain patients has shown that what the right hemisphere knows can only be communicated non-linguistically—without using written or spoken language. However, what the left hemisphere knows can be expressed using language, indicating that language skills are contained in the left hemisphere.

- Nerve cells, called neurons, are the communications cells of the nervous system. Hair-like tentacles (dendrites), which extend from the cell body, are the neuron's receivers.
- The axon, a tail-like structure on the cell body, is the neuron's transmitter.
- The synapse, the connection point between two neurons or a neuron and a muscle or gland cell.

Our skin has pain receptors, both mechanoreceptors that allow us to feel pressure and touch, and thermoreceptors that allow us to feel heat and cold. With all of our senses, an electrochemical signal is passed between neurons and travels through the nerves, spinal cord, and brain.

The branch of medicine that studies and treats the nervous system is called neurology, and doctors who practice in this field of medicine are called neurologists. □



D

Deoxyribo Nucleic Acid (DNA) is a chemical found in the nucleus of cells and carries the 'instructions' for the development and functioning of living organisms. It is often compared to a set of blueprints since it contains the instructions needed to build cells. These instructions are divided into segments along a strand of DNA and are called genes. Genes are a DNA sequence that code for the production of a protein and control hereditary characteristics such as eye colour or personality behaviours.

Proteins determine the type and function of a cell, so a cell knows whether it is a skin cell, a blood cell, a bone cell, etc. and how to perform its appropriate tasks. Other DNA sequences are responsible for structural purposes or are involved in the regulation and use of genetic information.

Structure

The structure of DNA can be compared to a ladder. It has an alternating chemical phosphate and sugar backbone, making the 'sides' of the ladder. Deoxyribose is the name of the sugar found in the backbone of DNA. In between the two sides of this sugar-phosphate backbone are four nitrogenous bases: adenine (A), thymine (T), cytosine (C), and guanine (G). A grouping like this of a phosphate, a sugar, and a base makes up a subunit of DNA called a nucleotide. These bases make up the 'rungs' of the ladder, and are attached to the backbone where the deoxyribose molecules are located.

The chemical bases are connected to each other by hydrogen bonds, but the bases can only connect to a specific base partner—adenine and thymine connect to each other, and cytosine and guanine connect to each other. The arrangement of these bases is very important as this determines what the organism will be—a plant, an animal, or a fungus. This is called genetic coding. For example, one side of DNA could have the genetic code of AAATTTCCCGGGATC. Its complementary side would then have to be TTAAAGGGCCCTAG.

Shape

Even though the shape of DNA is often described as a ladder, it is not a straight ladder. It is twisted to the right, making the shape of the DNA molecule a right-handed double helix. This shape allows for a large amount of genetic information to be 'stuffed' into a very small space. In fact, if you lined up each molecule of DNA in one cell end to end, the strand would be six feet in length.

Replication

Before a cell can divide and make a new cell, it must first duplicate its DNA. This process is called DNA replication. When it is time to replicate, the hydrogen bonds holding the base pairs together break, allowing the two DNA strands to unwind and separate. The specific base pairing provides a way for DNA to make exact copies of itself. Each half of the original DNA still has a base attached to its sugar-phosphate backbone.

A new strand of DNA is made by an enzyme called DNA polymerase. It reads the original strand and matches complementary bases to the original strand. New strands attach to both sides of the original DNA, making two identical DNA double helices composed of one original and one new strand. ■



Hong Kong National Security Law

Explaining the Chinese move



The National People's Congress of China recently approved a decision to enact national security legislation for Hong Kong, a move critics say will fundamentally

undermine the freedoms that were enshrined in the territory's laws when it was returned to Chinese rule in 1997. Chinese assert that the piece of legislation will safeguard Hong Kong and China from separatist, subversive and terrorist activities, and foreign intervention. The law would make criminal acts out of any of the following:

1. Secession—breaking away from the country;
2. Subversion—undermining the power or authority of the central government;
3. Terrorism—using violence or intimidation against people; and
4. Activities by foreign forces that interfere in Hong Kong.

Let's have a look at what these

On May 28, China's National People's Congress (NPC) approved a decision to move forward with national security legislation for Hong Kong. The vote approves the standing committee to draft legislation to punish secession, subversion of state power, terrorism and acts that endanger national security in Hong Kong. Beijing has asserted the law change will be tightly focused and non-threatening. Its plan includes outposts of mainland agencies to curb interference by foreign countries. The move has prompted widespread condemnation, especially from around the Western world. European Union representatives and the foreign ministries of the UK, Australia and Canada have argued that Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy would diminish, violating the Sino-British Joint Declaration, Hong Kong residents' rights and freedoms would be harmed, and that bypassing the local legislature cannot be justified. However, Chinese authorities and the Beijing-backed government in Hong Kong say there is no threat to the city's autonomy and the new security law will be tightly focused.

Ghufran Wakeel

criminal acts are, and examine what is the actual norm is elsewhere:

1. Secession

This is the encouraging of or deliberate moves to break up a country. Most secession events occur as a result of civil war, and rarely via democratic procedures. China has had an anti-secession law since 2005; therefore, it is not entirely unexpected that it wishes Hong Kong to come into line with its own legislature.

The United States takes an ambiguous position on secession, although there have been rulings (Alaska, 2006) that would suggest it would be considered illegal if any serious movement came into being. Spain, with the Basque separatist movement, effectively considers secession illegal and an imprisonable offence. In many real cases, it becomes effectively a moot point, as such movements tend to lead to civil unrest, and violence such as the 30-year war that took place in Sri Lanka.

before being resolved—and that too only after hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths. The secession issue is a headache for Beijing. Having it not applicable to Hong Kong could mean that the territory becomes a hub for anti-China sentiment not just in Hong Kong, but elsewhere in China. When examined, it is not unreasonable, *per se*, for Beijing to be concerned about this and to look for options for bringing Hong Kong in line with the rest of the national laws on the issue.

2. Subversion

Subversion is trickier to pin down as the laws can be applied with very wide-ranging interpretations. Beijing will need to be careful with how it describes this. It is hard to define "Undermining the Government" without being accused of draconian measures.

In Hong Kong, the new law calls for penalties for "abusing the (Chinese) national anthem". Although it seems unnecessary, it should be noted that this is also in place in other countries such as Canada, India, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, Philippines, and several African and South American nations. Any national anthem is a symbol of respect, and deliberately showing the exact opposite is disrespectful to the citizens of that same nation,



regardless of who it is. It is also worth remembering that President Trump was incensed when various American sports stars recently knelt on one knee rather than stand for the US national anthem. Although minor as a transgression, those who choose to abuse a national song ought to be aware it can be considered highly insulting to others. Abuse of a song is

pretty childish. There are better ways to make one's points of view known. If you wish to protest, just mouth the words and claim a sore throat. Another oft-quoted issue is the burning of a national flag. It is illegal in China, however, again the United States is somewhat conflicted in its own approach to such an act, although President Trump has shown approval to a new motion to criminalize this under the "Flag Desecration Amendment". Other countries, such as the United Kingdom, are taking similar paths, while it is already an offence in many countries, including most of Europe, India, Japan, Mexico and New Zealand. While flag burning is just one example, the emotive issue concerning subversion is defining the exact term. For that, we will need to see the draft law. It is the definition of subversion, or any lack of description of the term, that will prove the most awkward for Beijing to present as binding upon Hong Kong citizens.

3. Terrorism

All countries have anti-terrorism laws and it is not unreasonable for Beijing to include Hong Kong into its national legislation and protection against this. The issue for Beijing will be defining that element so it cannot be broadly used against citizens creating mischief (such as ripping up



paving stones). The definition of weapons may be a key point here in determining a protesting Hong Kong citizen engaged in stone-throwing from a terrorist armed with semi-automatic weapons or explosives.

One should be reminded about the position of the United States Police Force in this, where armed officers have recently been filmed shooting, and in some cases killing, unarmed or low-risk individuals and used the 'combatting terrorism' gambit as an excuse for use of firearms.

4. Activities by Foreign Forces

A disturbing element of the problems in Hong Kong is that there is hard evidence some 'pro-democracy' protesters have been paid HKD 300 each to demonstrate. That might not be much for the average citizen, but it's enough to sway some teenagers. International media doesn't wish to follow the activities looking to undermine China, but they have always been present. They alone are not the reason for Hong Kong's unrest, but they do seek to make it worse. Again, how wide-ranging measures are to clamp down on foreign subversion remains to be seen. A sensationalist, anti-China media presence does not help matters. More should be done between the Chinese government and foreign press Associations to try and forge workable ties and understandings of their respective roles and the Chinese regulatory position.

China's Stance

The draft represents a significant legislative step



China's National Security Law being criticized by Hong Kong opposition and the West

The Chinese National People's Congress adopted the National Security Law set to rein in the semi-autonomous region

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

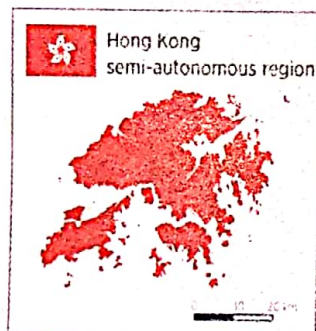
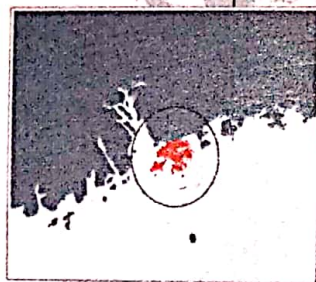
The law prohibits the demolition of the Chinese central government, the encouraging of the act of rebellion, treason, terrorism and foreign intervention

The law entered into force without votes and acceptance of Hong Kong's local council

The law disabled the Hong Kong local council

The law paved the way for Hong Kong's opposition media leaders, some business people, leading activists to be prosecuted for national security reasons

Foreign civil society organizations and companies that intervene in the political issues in Hong Kong can also be targeted by the law



US SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO

After careful study of developments over the reporting period, I certified to Congress today that Hong Kong does not continue to warrant treatment under United States laws in the same manner as US laws were applied to Hong Kong before July 1997. No reasonable person can assert today that Hong Kong maintains a high degree of autonomy from China, given facts on the ground



PRESIDENT OF EU COUNCIL CHARLES MICHEL

Europe supported the one country, two systems principle that governs Hong Kong's autonomy. We are not naive about Chinese behavior

CHINA DOES NOT WANT TO SHARE CONSEQUENCES

A pro-Chinese delegate was appointed as the head of the Home Affairs Committee, which had a critical role in examining the laws and taking them to the voting process at the Hong Kong legislature

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam appointed pro-Chinese Starry Lee as committee leader

The Chinese government does not want the security law to share the same fate of the return bill to China that had failed in Hong Kong due to protests

PROTEST IN HONG KONG

The opposition groups staged protests in Hong Kong at the Central District and Causewaybay, where local government buildings and Chinese liaison offices are located

At times clashes took place between protesters and police. Hong Kong police detained at least 360 people after the demonstrations

THE REACTION OF THE WEST

The US and EU made statements against the National Security Law of Chinese government

International Response

As expected, the US government has reacted strongly. President Donald J. Trump said Hong Kong can no longer be deemed sufficiently autonomous from China to warrant the special treatment it has enjoyed under US law. Trump said the United States will take steps to revoke Hong Kong's special trade status and sanction Chinese and Hong Kong officials. But how much of its special status will be lost and over what period remains to be seen.

More surprising has been the vigorous response by the previously timid United Kingdom. It not only joined Australia, Canada and the United States in a strong joint statement of protest but also announced that it is preparing to extend visa opportunities to hundreds of thousands of Hong Kong holders of British National Overseas passports. UK officials have indicated that if Beijing fails to relent, such passport holders may be allowed to live and work in the United Kingdom and eventually obtain UK citizenship.

The European Union has expressed "grave concern" over Beijing's action, and Japan has also voiced opposition. The forthcoming Group of Seven (G7) meeting could mobilize further pressures against Beijing. Reactions from the United States and others will surely not sway Beijing from its current course but they could make the new legislation less ambitious in articulation, if not in implementation.



regarding Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) security issues. It aims to resolve HK's legal deficiencies and prevent internal and external forces from using the region as a tool or creating situations that threaten national security.

Article 23 of the Basic Law allows the HKSAR government to improve its legal system when safeguarding national security. However, 20 years after Hong Kong's return to the Chinese mainland, enforcing local legislation has been problematic. The draft addresses HK's legal obstacles while aiming to strengthen legislative vulnerabilities. The measure also echoes the basic principles of the rule of law.

The national security legislation is fundamentally necessary for the "one country, two systems" principle. Hong Kong opposition forces and Western media have said the draft decision would destroy it. On the contrary, the draft law is a move aimed at preventing external forces from meddling in HK affairs. It would also deter the power of local extremists. The decision would reestablish a stable environment where the "one country, two systems" principle could work smoothly.

Extreme opposition forces try to steer Hong Kong off course and direct it to external influences like the US. Opposition entities in HK and the US try to create a value system against China's central government and the

What is in the legislation?

China's legislative body, the National People's Congress, approved the introduction of new legislation that will be drafted over the next two months and is expected to take effect in September. The laws would effectively prevent, stop and punish any acts occurring within Hong Kong that are aimed at splitting China, subverting state power, organizing and carrying out terrorist activities, or otherwise seriously endangering national security. Such acts include activities by foreign or external forces that interfere in Hong Kong's affairs.

The legislation will eventually be inserted into Annex III of Hong Kong's Basic Law and promptly promulgated and implemented by the Hong Kong government, bypassing Hong Kong's Legislative Council.

To make certain these new laws actually safeguard national security, the decision also authorizes national security organs to set up institutions in Hong Kong "as necessary." The Ministry of State Security, the Ministry of Public Security, and secret police organizations that rule mainland China but have been formally precluded from Hong Kong until now can begin to operate openly in Hong Kong.



"one country, two systems" policy. They try to redefine the policy, and what HK democracy and freedom mean to them. In recent months, they have distorted Hong Kong public opinion. The concept of right and wrong has become so warped that last year's law-defying violence has since been labelled as "justice."

Hong Kong security is an integral part of China's national security. The security loopholes must be plugged to prevent external forces from meddling in its affairs and using the city to attack China. Furthermore, Hong Kong affairs would cease to be a diplomatic issue between China and the US. For Hong Kong, the next steps are peace and revitalization, which will be necessary for it to reclaim its standing as an international financial hub.

By adding greater national security protection, Hong Kong's status as a special administrative region will be consolidated. Moreover, it would make it easier to maintain its unique political system and prevent it from being hijacked by international situations. The extra layer of protection would also make it increasingly difficult for some "ambitious" politicians to poison the city's atmosphere. Hong Kong capitalism would begin to reveal the common traits it shares with developed societies rather than underdeveloped ones. Therein lies the main interest of all Hong Kong people. ■

The writer is a student of law.



Transparency International's annual Corruption Perception Index ranks how crooked a country is on the basis of perceived levels of public-sector corruption. While we have reduced corruption to the files of government offices and people in charge of those, it is evident in every sphere of life. We are corrupt in toto. A roadside hawker sells a couple of rotten fruits in every dozen; a doctor prescribes medicine of a particular manufacturer and suggests a certain laboratory for testing; a banker misleadingly sells insurance products; hordes of impoverished people sell their legitimate right to vote during election, and so on. From destitute genre to affluent elites, corruption has turned into a way of life.

PENCHANT FOR

How to root out the evil

CORRUPTION

Qasim Dhillon

Literature is replete with hackneyed causes of corruption such as low salary in public sector, political intervention, lack of education, and poverty, to mention a few.

However, there is more to it, which needs to be unravelled. The biggest stimulus behind financial corruption is depravity. While we have built robust operating systems which flag even a marginal deviation from the SOPs, we have failed to ingrain morality and ethics in persons operating them. Moreover, most of these causes are pinpointed by academic researchers whose primary research substantially relies on questionnaires. Even the ways through which research data is collected are not corruption-free. Barring a few, the academic researchers get their research work done from the students they supervise for thesis, a requirement for completion of a student's degree. Absolutely indifferent to the research findings, these students

either fill research questionnaires on their own or request their acquaintances who do this favour without paying heed to the questions and their responses. The results, therefore, are not much reliable. Moreover, academic researchers do not have work experience in public or private sector; thus, they are oblivious to the ground realities and their interpretations lack an in-depth analysis. The shoddy quality of research is also reflected in terms of dismal ranking of our varsities in the QS World University Rankings 2019 whereby only seven universities from Pakistan could qualify among the world's top 1000. The notion that low salary is the principal reason behind corruption lacks concrete evidence. Corruption, where it exists, is evenly conspicuous among all ranks. It runs through a chain of people. From where the chain starts in a particular case depends on the social status and prominence of the person willing to bribe. Tersely, corruption does not recognize salary slabs. Our history is

littered with instances where higher-ups—even those with hefty salaries—in an organization were prosecuted and later on incarcerated for corruption. It is not the low level of salary but the feeling of being relatively underpaid. Corruption takes place when a qualified candidate is paid less than his under-qualified counterpart(s). The aggrieved then sees corruption money as an adequate compensation to bridge the gap between his actual and perceived reasonable salary. The issue of political intervention is not Greek to us but what actually adds fuel to the fire is love for sinecure. Such a position opens wider avenues of corruption and offers more influence over large resources. Not all of the government officials tolerate unwarranted political pressure. Those who bent in the face of such influence are internally more inclined either towards securing a lucrative and influential position or they fear getting transferred away from their native town.

In addition to that, the desire to whether or not become a part of the entrenched mafia at workplace also influences an individual's tendency for corrupt practices. Lack of education, often cited as another major cause of corruption, does not engender this menace. We often see highly-qualified people undergoing corruption inquiries more often than those with low level of education. Moreover, educated people are more aware of the loopholes in prevailing internal controls in an organization and, thus, are more inclined towards making illegitimate gains. However, it is basically the lackluster education system that only emphasizes the transmission of knowledge rather than transformation of minds. Despite having utter disdain for corruption at the core of our curriculum, proclivity for corruption

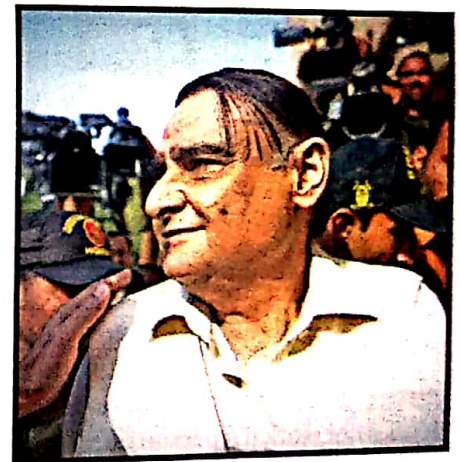
morality and ethics in their students. Resultantly, corruption in Pakistan has become an acceptable norm even among highly-qualified individuals. Labelling poverty as an instigator for engaging in corrupt practices makes us overlook the actual stimulator. Had only poverty always instigated the desire of corruption, affluent people would have never pursued this reprehensible act. Even the CPI 2019 report asserts that corruption is more pervasive in countries where governments listen only to the voices of wealthy or well-connected

expertise, let alone moral values. The best way to thwart the incessant penchant for corruption among officials is to train them and hone their characters. The prevailing best practices and internal controls in the cleanest public sector of New Zealand can be a useful tool. Apart from the public sector, countering this tendency among large masses of Pakistan as a whole is a pressing concern. To start with, lessons entailing fruits of a corruption-free public sector may be included in the curriculum. Economic progress of Scandinavian countries is a good case in point. Even more effective could be the presence of teachers with impeccable character which can ensure generations to come to have a sound character. Lastly, the government must earmark funds for research to be



individuals. It is not the state of being poor but the desire to accumulate more. Neither all poor are corrupt nor are all elites naïve. There are poor people who hardly make their both ends meet, but they do not get involved in corruption seeing it a vice. On the other hand, there are opulent people who inexorably commit corruption for the sake of stockpiling. Thus, linking poverty with corruption is not plausible. Gone are the days when one would indulge into corrupt practices under compulsion of domestic hardships. The developments that took place in the public-sector working environment require policymakers to revisit the controls they had devised for stamping out corruption. Government officials rarely receive training to strengthen their professional

conducted by the working professionals. Sans a doubt, a qualified working individual, who has a research degree and first-hand experience of the working environment of an organization, can conduct a research far more efficiently than an academic researcher. Responses received through questionnaires and interviews, and findings through observation by a qualified working individual, would be way more reliable and can be proved fruitful for policymakers for improvising their strategies against corruption. ■



among educated individuals is ever rising. In his magnum opus "Fallen Leaves," world-famous American writer, historian and philosopher, Will Durant, underpinned the vital role of teachers in the formation of character. He suggested that at the time of selection, apart from technical competence, the influence that a teacher's personality, moral values and manners might have upon the children ought to be given equal weight. This highlights the prevailing gap in terms of abysmal role of teachers who failed to inculcate

How to Achieve Your GOALS



The modern world is a global village of great competition. Every person is chasing certain goals in his life. Goals are the reasons through which our lives get meanings and purposes. They are directions that keep us going to make our dreams come true. They also give focus to our lives and keep us motivated. Additionally, goals define us and make our identity clear to the outside world.

The lives of all successful people revolve around goals. Setting and achieving goals does not only give the power to control one's life, but it also helps to determine if a person is going in the right direction. The process of setting a goal, and the courage to keep on struggling,

matter the most in its achievement. It does not work if a person only says that he wants to do a certain thing. Goals are not achieved by only aiming to accomplish them. They require strong will power, constant motivation, and interest as well. For this reason, the process of setting a goal needs careful consideration. In between setting and achieving a goal, there are many steps that a person needs to take to get the best result. Following are the three ways that will help you in setting and achieving your goals through life.

1. Be specific

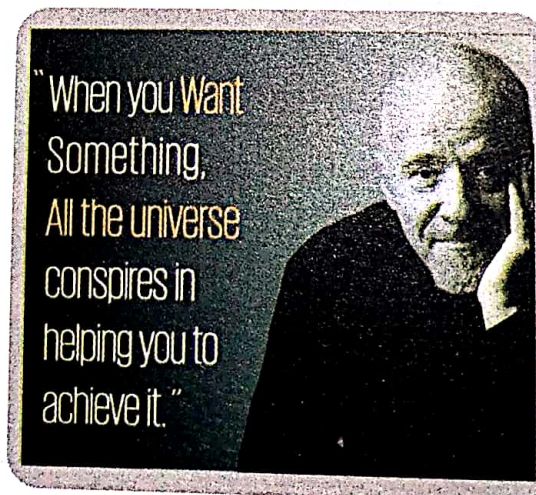
The first step to achieving a goal is that you must be specific about what you intend to accomplish. By being specific, a person realizes that his target can be

transformed from an abstract to a tangible reality. It also shows that the objective is achievable. Everything looks impossible before it is achieved, but using one's common sense works here. For example, if a person says that his goal for today is to become the richest man in the world, it is, simply, silly, to say it mildly.

In this way, one must carefully consider the factor if the target is important at all. Accomplishing a goal that turns out to be of no use is mere waste of time. Therefore, instead of putting efforts into something meaningless, you should set such goals that are beneficial in every way. There must be a clear distinction between what is important for you and what is important to you.

Also, it is not necessary that what is important for your friend is also important for you. Therefore, before

getting determined to achieve a target, make sure it matters for you, and it is worth all your time and energy. For example, a woman says she wants to sell ladies' dresses that are light-weight and made from breathable material. She wants to make these dresses for female



athletes in countries that have warmer climates. The woman has done her research well and she knows the market value as well. On the other hand, another woman says that she wants to sell women's dresses. In both of these cases, the first woman is more specific in setting and achieving her goal. Therefore, keep your intentions clear. You must be sure about what you want, why you want, when you want, and what are the steps to achieve that.

2. Don't procrastinate; be consistent

One thing that keeps a person away from reaching the destination is procrastination, and not being consistent in efforts. When you start going towards your goal, keep going. The more a person delays, the more he goes away from the target. Also, the habit of indecisiveness tires one's mind to the extent that one stops struggling.

In the same way, when a person cannot decide whether to start the journey today or tomorrow, he puts himself into a puzzling situation intentionally. This state is hard to come out from. Once a person develops the habit of procrastination, he only wastes time, and does not progress in any field.

According to Sarah Ban Breathnach, "The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers.

But above all, the world needs dreamers who do." For this reason, if you want to do it, go for it right now because this is the right moment. If you wait for the right moment while sitting on a couch, you will never achieve your target. Right moments do not come; they are created. Sometimes, a task needs only to be initiated by you and then it keeps on happening on its own. Also, the universe brings you what you truly desire and struggle to get.

Procrastination is only a state of mind. If you have enough inner strength and positive motivating force, this obstacle can be easily removed. You know what you are capable of. Therefore, do not let doubts take control of your life. Start a journey with a strong faith in yourself.

Be consistent in your journey. Take every step with positive energy. Make yourself accountable for every action and its reaction. You can become consistent if you start keeping track of your progress.

3. Welcome positive vibes and avoid negative ones

When you feel de-motivated while achieving your goal, do not forget to take inspiration from the surroundings.

Reading a good book, watching a powerful documentary or a movie work best when a person feels numb. While on the path to achieving a goal, positive vibes must always be welcomed because they help in progress. They also help in lifting morale.

In the same way, a person must always trust in himself and must never pay attention to others' opinions. People's opinions about us have nothing to do with us. It has everything to do with them and their level of mentality. Therefore, people's judgment, negative comments, and harsh criticism must be avoided as

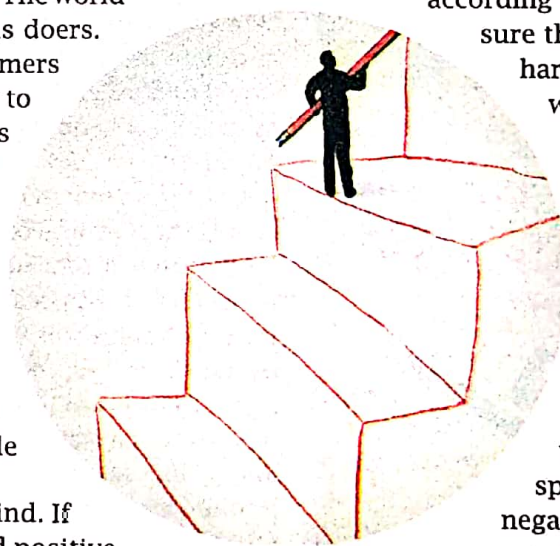
much as possible. Instead, they should be taken more positively. It makes a person realize who are his well-wishers and who want to fall in the pit. Other cannot see or read what is going on in our mind. Therefore, they cannot understand why you are chasing a certain target.

Dependence upon others' discouraging statements takes a person away from his goal. This situation is like imprisonment where a person behaves the way others want.

For this reason, it is advisable to live according to one's rules, instead of living up according to others' standards. If a person is sure that whatever he wants to do does not harm anyone, he must start his journey without paying attention to how society will respond. We are born to give meaning to our life. We are responsible to live the best of our life. For this reason, giving attention to others' baseless views is a foolish thing ever.

In a nutshell, setting and achieving goals makes our lives meaningful. They give us recognition by helping us explore our qualities. By being specific, consistent, and by avoiding negative thoughts, a person can achieve every task.

Also, goal does not mean aiming to become the richest person or a celebrity. It can be any target that mostly goes unnoticed. For example, if you intend to wake up early and you do so, it means that you have achieved your goal. It means that you have the power to set and get the target. So whenever you accomplish a task, congratulate yourself. Feel proud as well. Feel good with every step towards your destination. It will not only give your extra strength but will also bless you with small moments to celebrate as well. ■



Muhammad Atif Sheikh

"British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has died," this 7-word piece of news from a Twitter handle went viral on 7th of April. PM Johnson was, at that time, under treatment for coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in an ICU of St Thomas' Hospital, in London. The news of his death was broken from an account @BBCbreaki which turned out fake as official Twitter handle of BBC was @BBCBreaking. This post was re-tweeted hundreds of times before being deleted. Since this was posted through an account that looked similar to BBC's official handle, a number of people got this news item as true. This is but one manifestation of the fact that social media, with all its pros and cons, has achieved an overwhelming influence on our lives.

Online platforms like Facebook and Twitter and Web 2.0 applications like Google and Blogs have given an altogether new direction to the business of news. Reporting, too, has undergone a paradigm shift. Entering the field of journalism has become very easy nowadays. You just need a PC or a smartphone to become a reporter, an editor, a designer, a distributor, a publisher, a broadcaster, a producer, and what not! One can use Facebook, YouTube, Twitter or a blog site to post text, pictures, audio and video at any time, from anywhere. The reason why social media is extraordinarily effective is the power it has gained by giving currency to the culture of 'braking news'. Today, terms like 'citizen journalism' and 'mobile journalism' have gained wider acceptance in the societies around the world. Owing to limited opportunities for participation in radio and television content, people are increasingly turning to platforms where they can read the content of their choice, comment on that and express their views freely and even create the content by themselves. People have effectively become producers as well as consumers of information and knowledge. It has happened because we are a part of an information society where most people are leading dual lives, i.e. real and virtual (embedded in information systems). That is why William Dutton of the Oxford Internet Institute has termed social media as the fifth pillar of state. He opines, "We are witnessing the emergence of powerful new voices and networks which can act independently of the traditional media." This statement seems absolutely true when seen in the context of growing emergence, use and popularity of new platforms alongside the traditional ones in the domain of social media. The crux of the point is: it is the freedom of expression that not only attracted a lot of public attention to social media but also resulted in its wider use. At present, almost 49 percent of the world's total population is attached with social media as active users. According to a report titled as 'Digital 2020: Global Digital Overview', 'at the start of 2020 ... social media users have passed the 3.8 billion mark.'

Social media, basically, are the internet- and mobile phone-based platforms that allow for asynchronous and multi-dimensional information sharing, communication, and participation in activities. It is an amalgamation of telecommunication and social interaction to provide a platform where people may have two-way communication through text, pictures, audio and video content. A salient feature of this is the facility one has in creating and sharing the content.

Social media tools offer an online networking service whereby users can form a virtual network with like-minded individuals. They offer services like chatting, instant messaging, photo- and video-sharing and



**UNBRIDLED
SOCIAL
MEDIA**

Great power involves great responsibility

Most popular of these platforms are Facebook and LinkedIn. Then there are blogs that an individual, known as blogger, creates and posts. These may contain text, images, videos and links to other websites. A striking feature of a blog that it is interactive. It means that readers can post their comments that anyone can see and read. In addition, we have microblogs, which have a word limit of up to 140 words, whereby users can write and share their thoughts with others. Twitter is an example of such a site as users can post a message and read those posted by others. Vlogs are sites where the content consists of videos with supporting text. YouTube is the world's biggest video-sharing site that also provides live-streaming facility. On this site, users can not only watch videos of their choice but also are able to post their own and to comment on and share them. Social media has gained immense

SOCIAL MEDIA

public acceptance in the modern-day world mainly due to the power of the internet and the growing use of smartphones. Almost 4.57 billion people were active internet users as of April 2020, encompassing 59 percent of the global population while 3.5 billion people are active users of smartphones. According to Global Digital Overview 2020, the average internet user now spends 6 hours and 43 minutes online each day with the use of that on mobile phone accounts for 3 hours and 22 minutes while internet users spend an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes per person, per day using social media. Pakistan, too, is among the countries where the use of social media is fast gaining ground. As per the above-cited report, Pakistan is the fourth biggest country in terms of largest absolute growth in the number of internet users between January 2019 and January 2020—the country stands

at 20th place in percentage terms. However, it is also true that when it comes to the greatest number of people not connected to the internet, Pakistan is again at third place. Similarly, Pakistan ranks 17th when it comes to the largest change in the absolute number of social media users. At present, 37 million Pakistanis—17% of the country's total population—are active social media users. Moreover, 76.38 million people—35% of Pakistan's population—are the users of the internet out of which a big chunk of 48.4%—almost half the total number—are active social media users. Moreover, almost 99% of active social media users do so on mobile devices—in 2018-19, 75% of the country's total internet traffic was routed through mobile phones.

According to Newzoo Global Games Market Report 2019, Pakistan was the 19th largest

country in terms of the number of smartphone-users with their number reaching 32.5 million last year. However, when it comes to the number of people who own smartphone, Pakistan, with a figure of 15.9%, is at 49th place among 50 countries for

which data were available. An overview of basic requirements of using social media, i.e. internet, mobile phone and computer, can be had from the data reported in Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey which says that 97.5% of country's households own mobile sets with this ratio 93.9% in urban areas and 91.6% in rural ones. Similarly, 26.4% of houses have computers (15.1% urban households and 8.1% rural ones) and 22.9% houses have an internet connection (11.8% in urban areas and 4.9% in rural ones).

Although Pakistan lags far behind many countries in the contemporary world in terms of access to internet, use of smartphones and internet costs, yet these impediments are being overcome fast. This assertion is corroborated by the fact that during the past one year, a growth of 17% in mobile phone users, 6.2% in mobile phone connections and 7% in active social media users has been witnessed. This vividly depicts the current scenario of social media use in Pakistan.

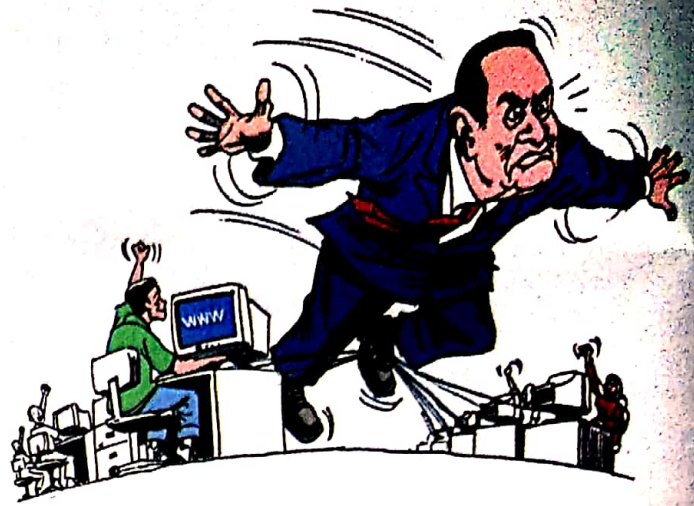
Amidst this exponential growth, it is heartening that the government, too, is making strenuous efforts to regulate social media. In continuation of its efforts to regulate all social media platforms, the federal cabinet approved, on January 28, 2020, the Citizens Protection (Against Online Harm) Rules, 2020. To have broad-



based consultations to improve on these laws, the government also formed a special committee, named as "Consultation Committee on Citizen Protection (Against Online Harm) Rules 2020," so as to initiate a broad-based, open consultation process with all stakeholders including civil society, human and digital rights groups, social media platforms (technology companies) and media, etc. to solicit constructive input to address the concerns expressed by different forums.

However, here rise some pertinent questions: when we have a strong penchant for freedom of opinion and of expression, then do we really need such rules? If yes, why? Is there any other way to regulate the social media content without compromising on personal freedoms? Dr Sobia Abdi, head of the Department of Mass Communication at University of Okara, answers these questions in the following words:

"Freedom of expression can be considered the foundation of the provision of basic human rights as Article 19 of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, guarantees freedom of speech and of expression to all the citizens of Pakistan. Although other types of media were very important, yet the present era is of social media as everyone can express his or her opinion on these digital platforms. One thing that needs particular mention here is that before the advent of social media, it was not possible for media users to express their opinions instantly on a piece of news or information—in our jargon, it is called feedback—as no reader of a newspaper or a listener of radio or even a viewer of a television was able to give his instant feedback to the concerned media organization. On the contrary, social media provides everyone with an opportunity to give his or her feedback instantly in the comment box or through his own post. It has both positive and negative effects, simultaneously. As a teacher, I take it as our collective responsibility to apprise people of the fact that with freedom comes responsibility whereby one must follow some rules and observe some limitations related to community, society, traditions, culture and religion. Social media organizations have their own rules whereby they can block any material that flouts those. For instance, any post which contains some obscene stuff, violates copyrights laws and/or promotes extremism and terrorism is instantly deleted by Facebook and



YouTube. And, if these organizations are sensitive to certain things and they reserve the right to decide about the publication of that through their platforms; the states must also have the authority and be sensitive towards its ideological foundations and social values and norms, and enact regulations and laws to thwart the dissemination of anything that goes against them. I believe that freedom of expression must also be complemented by responsibility in using that freedom. The state must legislate on these issues so that no one is stopped from expressing his or her opinion with reasonable restrictions. It is especially important because the enforcement of robust rules would also guarantee people's freedom to express their opinions. When no one will be prosecuted or persecuted on any other pretext than these laws, a sense of protection and responsibility will definitely develop among the social media users. Moreover, these rules must also be able to adapt to the latest innovations in this field as digital

media is fast adopting new technologies, and the laws and rules must also be altered accordingly, especially in matters related to cybersecurity and economy as during these times of coronavirus-caused lockdown, the number of social media users and the use of data has grown exponentially."

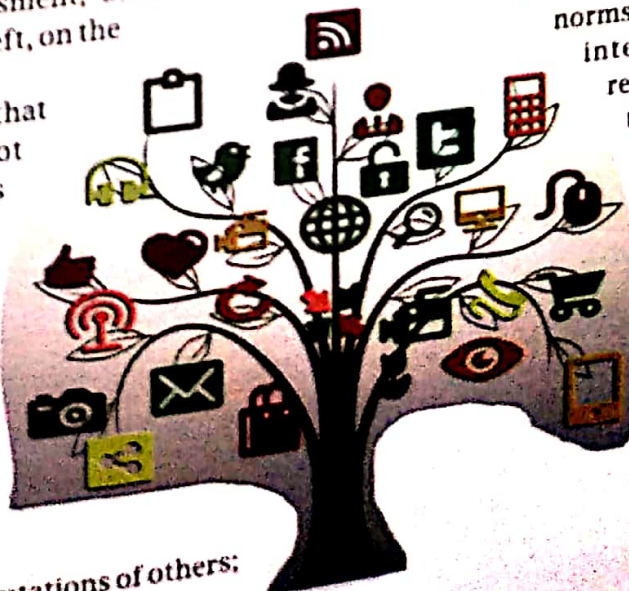
Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." So



other.
Freedom of expression is a right that is complex in nature; it is not absolute in any sense and comes with some exclusive responsibilities and obligations. It does not give one a carte blanche to say and do what one wills. Under its article 19(3), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, imposes following curbs on unbridled freedom of expression:

(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others;

The writer can be contacted at:
misteratif@yahoo.com



Youth Engagement can build Soft Power of Pakistan

A big chunk of the world's population consists of young people who are regarded, especially in the developing world, as critical and crucial agents for social change and economic progress. At present, approximately 60 percent of the world's population is under 30 with more than half of this bracket having ages between 16 and 29 years. Therefore, it is important to draw up better policies to channel the talents and skills of young people in the right direction, and to prepare and encourage them to play their due role in the development of the society.



In developing countries, youth populations are the largest. Some countries of South Asia would see a continuous increase in that especially until the 2030s. According to recent estimates, Pakistan's youth population stands

at around 55.7 million, representing over 30% of the country's total population. According to the World Bank Report (2007), Pakistan's youth population will peak in 2039, with an average annual growth rate of 1.3% by 2015 and 9% from 2025 to 2035, as predicted by the United Nations Medium Variant Projections. Hence, it is very important for the policymakers to bring some changes to their research styles so as to get more accurate results and understand youth issues in the real sense. Instead of focusing solely on structured and formal research methods, local and meaningful youth participation should be responded to on a daily basis. Currently, about 3 million skilled

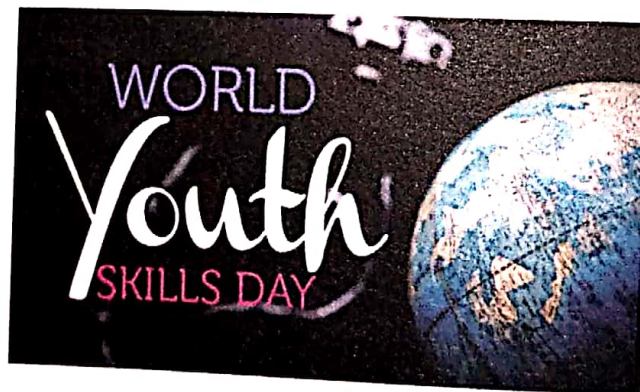
Pakistani youth are at home due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is the time for the government to engage them in more than 90 freelancing informal youth fields, e.g. e-commerce, mobile development, email and marketing automation strategy, content writing, SEO SMM experts, audio-video experts, accountants and consultants, support and assistant, designers and creatives, IT and networking, data science and analytics, translation, engineering and architecture, legal and corporate fields, to name a few. The government should urgently develop a website and register all the

skilled youth on it, and provide them with a state-sponsored platform. Pakistani young people are very energetic and willing to do anything for the country's development. They are optimistic about their role in bringing peace and prosperity to society. Keeping in view the rising youth bulge and emergence of new resources for youth development, it is very easy to engage skilled youth at a state-sponsored platform, and to link this platform to the main server of Google with effective and practicable youth policy and strategy for Pakistani youth. Even a national youth policy or provincial youth policies should

be made and implemented with coordination among the provinces under centre's supervision. In addition, policymakers must realize that youth empowerment can be achieved by engaging youth in the civil decision-making process and considering them stakeholders while pursuing youth-related policies. The government should consider

youth as future and must prioritize youth empowerment by increasing the share of the budget spent on youth development activities. There is also a dire need to conduct research so as to find out innovative ways to engage young people in a way that also leads to social development at large. ■

The writer is a member of Anti-Drug Task Force Punjab. He can be reached at mianmajid582@gmail.com





WORLD IN FOCUS

JOIN ME FOR EASY ACCESS TO BOOKS & NOTES

+92-310-545-450-3

NATIONAL



May 17: Singapore-based Pakistani filmmaker Shehzad Hameed Ahmad's documentary series on Afghanistan 'Caught in the Crossfire' and 'The Battle for Kabul' won two Silver awards at the prestigious World Media Festivals 2020 at

Hamburg, Germany.

May 18: Pakistan and the World Bank signed two loan agreements of \$371 million to support projects in the agriculture and social sectors.

May 18: Prime Minister Imran Khan (PMK) formally launched the disbursement of money under Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme among people who lost their jobs due to Covid-19 outbreak in Pakistan.

May 18: The government appointed Syed Muhammad Tariq Huda, a BS-21 officer, Member Customs (Operations) in Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

May 17: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Karachi sentenced ISIS facilitators Nadir Ali alias Murshid and Farhan alias Farooq Brohi to death in connection with the Sehwan bomb blast of 16 February 2017.

May 19: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$300 million emergency assistance loan to strengthen Pakistan's public health response to the coronavirus pandemic.

May 19: Punjab Governor, who is the chancellor of all universities across Punjab province, appointed Prof Dr Sarfraz Khurshid the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the Information Technology University (ITU) Lahore.

May 19: Chief Minister Punjab, Sardar Usman Buzdar, laid the foundation stone of Punjab Local Government Academy in Johar Town and launched the website of Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Programme.

May 19: The federal cabinet removed federal member Indus River System Authority (IRSA), Asjad Imtiaz, with immediate effect and approved the process of rolling heads of Punjab and Sindh members respectively from the IRSA for their

failure to discharge their duties, especially installation of telemetry system on the Indus Basin Irrigation System.

May 19: The federal cabinet formed a special committee to prepare a legal framework to outsource country's major airports to bring them at par with international standards.

May 20: After Sindh government's refusal to include the Prime Minister's Corona Relief Tiger Force in the provincial administrative system, PMK decided to place 154,000 members of the Tiger Force in Sindh under his party leader and provincial Governor Imran Ismail.

May 20: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) restrained Pakistan

M. Usman But

Group Captain (R) Saiful Azam

On June 15, Group Captain (R) Saiful Azam, Sitara-i-Jurat, war veteran of 1965 Indo-Pak War, passed away in Bangladesh.

Saiful Azam was born in Pabna District, East Bengal in 1941. He was commissioned as a fighter Pilot in October 1960. During 1965 War, he served in No. 17 Squadron at PAF Base Sargodha. Apart from inflicting heavy damage to Indian forces in 12 ground-attack missions, Azam also

had one IAF aircraft kill to his credit as well. For his valour and devotion to duty in 1965 War, he was awarded with "Sitara-i-Jurat". Saiful Azam also attained global repute when he shot down three Israeli aircraft during 1967 Arab-Israeli War. In recognition of his heroic contributions, he was honoured with the military awards by the governments of Jordan and Iraq. The US government also bestowed upon him the title of "Living Eagle" in 2001.



Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) from taking any adverse action against private medical colleges registered by the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC).

May 20: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) allocated a special package of Rs285 million for universities in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan, over and above their normal allocation for the upcoming financial year 2020-21.

May 20: Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) signed a declaration for a new World Anti-Doping Code 2021, which would come into effect on 1st of January next year.

May 20: The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) called upon the international community to gear up its efforts to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

May 20: The nationwide death tally of Covid-19 patients crossed the 1,000 mark.

May 20: PMIK addressed the Covid Action Platform of the World Economic Forum via video link. In his address, he reiterated his call of a debt-relief for the developing countries, including Pakistan, to cope with the challenges, including the economic difficulties and overwhelmed healthcare system, in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak.

May 20: Renowned radio and TV artist Saghir Illahi Khichi died of Covid-19-related complications.

May 20: Shaheen Raza, a woman MPA of PTI in Punjab, lost her life after battling coronavirus.

May 21: The federal cabinet decided to make the inquiry report of the Sugar Inquiry Commission public.

Environmental Performance Index 2020

Pakistan has been ranked 142nd out of 180 countries in the 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2020.

In the 2020 EPI, a biennial scorecard of national results on a range of sustainability issues, Denmark has ranked first in the world, followed by Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Germany in the top 10 countries. While Japan has ranked 12th, the United States of America ranks 24th, and China stands at 120th. India comes in near the bottom of the global rankings at 168th place worldwide, and only Afghanistan (178th place) ranks below India in Southern Asia. Leading the region is Bhutan (107th), with relatively high scores in biodiversity and habitat protection. Sri Lanka (109th) and Maldives (127th) round

out the top three countries in Southern Asia, followed by Pakistan (142nd), Nepal (145th), and Bangladesh (162nd).

The 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) provides a data-driven summary of the state of sustainability around the world. Using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, the EPI ranks 180 countries on environmental health and ecosystem vitality. Now in its 22nd year, the EPI report has become the premier metrics framework for global environmental policy analysis, ranking 180 countries on 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories covering environmental health and ecosystem vitality.



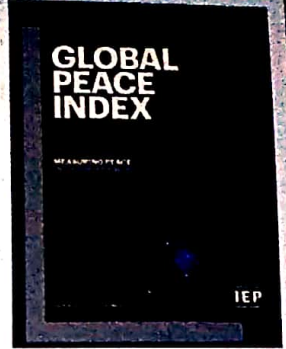
Global Peace Index

On June 11, the 14th edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI), which ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness, was released.

Produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the GPI is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness. It presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.

The GPI covers 99.7 percent of the world's population, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, and measures the state of peace across three domains: the level of Societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict; and the degree of Militarisation.

The results this year show that the level of global peacefulness deteriorated, with the average country score falling by 0.34 percent. This is the ninth deterioration in peacefulness in the last twelve years, with 81 countries improving, and 80 recording deteriorations over the past year. Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008. It is joined at the top of the index by New Zealand, Austria, Portugal and Denmark. Afghanistan is the least peaceful country in the world for the second year in a row, followed by Syria and Iraq.



May 21: PMIK ordered the advisers and special assistants in his cabinet to disclose their assets.

May 21: A jetliner carrying 98 people crashed in a crowded neighbourhood near the airport in Karachi, killing 96 people.

May 22: Sindh clinched the first-ever online Taekwondo Poomsae Championship by grabbing two gold, ten silver and 22 bronze medals.

May 22: The World Bank approved a \$500 million loan to help Pakistan improve health and education facilities, generate

The World's Most Powerful Passports

Number of visa free countries passport holders can visit in 2020



jobs for women and strengthen social safety nets under its efforts to fight the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

May 23: The officials in Xiamen, Fujian province of China, donated 400,000 yuan (US \$56,560) to help Pakistan fight the novel coronavirus spread.

May 24: Three athletes—Mehboob Ali, Mohammad Naeem and Samiullah—failed dope tests which were conducted during the 13th South Asian Games in Nepal last year.

May 24: PMIK and President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation against Covid-19 pandemic to jointly address the situation.

May 25: Veteran Communist leader, member of the Communist Party of Pakistan and founder of the Pakistan Kissan Committee, Chaudhry Fateh Mohammed, died at 97.

May 25: Ghazal singer Ijaz Qaiser, who had received the Pride of Performance Award in 2016, passed away.

May 27: Pakistan Army troops shot down an Indian spy quadcopter in Rakhchikri Sector along the Line of Control.

May 27: Punjab government approved the use of Actemra, a life-saving drug, on critically ill Covid-19 patients.

May 28: Noted Pashto poet, writer and journalist Jalbal Khattak passed away.

May 28: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) appointed Grant Bradburn as Head of High Performance Coaching and Saqlain Mushtaq as Head of International Player Development as part of its prestigious High Performance Centre's restructuring.

May 28: PML-N's twice elected MPA Sardar Atif Mazari was runned down by his son Basit Mazari.

May 28: PMIK addressed a virtual United Nations event on 'Financing for Development in the Covid-19 Era and Beyond' which was hosted by UN Secretary General and Canadian and Jamaican prime ministers.

May 29: Pakistani peacekeeper Sepoy Amir Aslam, who served the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, was posthumously awarded the Dag Hammarskjöld medal.

About the Medal

is a posthumous award which is given to members of UN peacekeeping operations who have lost their life while serving the line of duty. It was established on 22 July 1997 by UN

Pakistan's Debts

An IMF report shows Pakistan has \$12.731 billion of external debt repayment obligations in FY2021 that could be subject to treatment under the debt relief plan. Pakistan has \$2.545bn of debt service payments owed to commercial creditors next fiscal year, of which \$2.3bn is to China.

After this, \$6.744bn is owed to non Paris Club bilateral creditors, of which \$3.48bn is to China, \$2.245 to Saudi Arabia and \$1bn to the UAE. After this, the country has \$1.627bn payments to multilateral creditors, of which half is to the Asian Development Bank and the rest to the World Bank.

Paris Club creditors are owed \$787 million next year, with Japan and France accounting for the bulk of the amount.



Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1121, adopted on occasion of 50th anniversary of peacekeeping. The medal is named after Dag Hammarskjöld, who was the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. He died in a plane crash in 1961 while en route to cease-fire negotiations during Congo Crisis. The first Medal was presented to the family of Dag Hammarskjöld in 1998. Requests for the award of the medal to members of the UN peacekeeping operations shall emanate from the Secretary-General. He shall consider requests for award of the Medal from participating States and from survivors of personnel who have lost their lives during service with a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The first three medals were presented by the Secretary-General at a special United Nations General Assembly meeting on 6 October 1998. The medals presented on that occasion were the medal for the family of Dag Hammarskjöld himself, the medal for the family of the first peacekeeper to lose his life in a UN operation, French Commandant de Labarrière, who was killed by a

landmine in Palestine on 6 July 1948, and the medal for the family of Count Folke Bernadotte, UN Mediator in Palestine who was assassinated in Jerusalem on 17 September 1948.

May 29: Farhat Ali Mir assumed office as chairman of AJK Central Board of Revenue (CBR).

May 29: Pakistan Army troops shot down an Indian spy quadcopter which came from Kanzalwan Sector.

May 30: MV Manetm, the first bulk cargo ship carrying wheat and urea as a part of the Afghan transit trade, reached port city Gwadar.

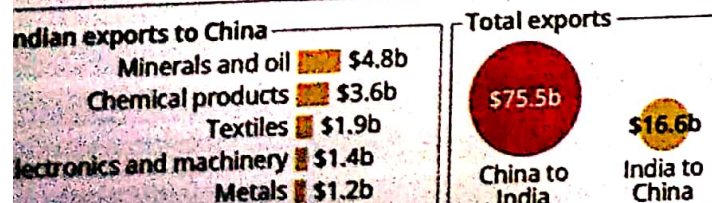
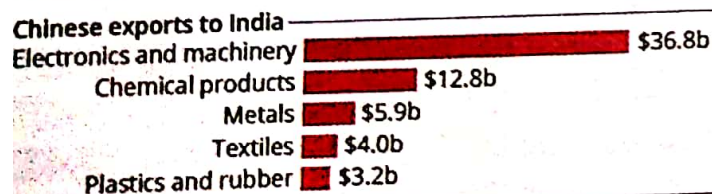
May 30: Wapda awarded the consultancy contract worth Rs156.226 million to a joint venture headed by Nespak for feasibility study, detailed engineering design, preparation of tender documents and PC-I of Murunj Dam project.

About the Dam

Murunj Dam project will be constructed across Kaha Nullah about 15 km from Marri village and 116 km west of Rajanpur, Punjab. Kaha Nullah is one of the largest hill torrents of the Koh-e-Sulaiman Range located in the

The Chinese-Indian Trade Relationship

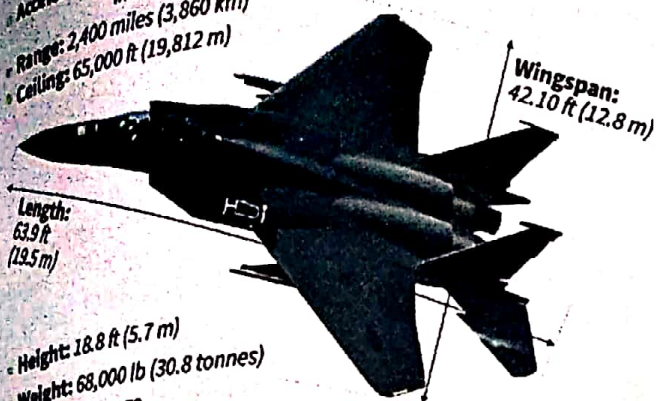
Trade in goods between China and India in 2018*



F-15 Eagle tactical fighter jet

- Speed: Mach 2.5 (3,087 kph)
- Acceleration: Mach 0.8 to 1.2 in under 25 sec
- Range: 2,400 miles (3,860 km)
- Ceiling: 65,000 ft (19,812 m)

- Maximum weapons payload: 29,500 lbs (13,380 kg)
- Power: Two P&W F100-PW-100 turbofan engines



- Weight: 68,000 lb (30.8 tonnes)
- First flight: 1972

Source: Boeing

vicinity of Rajanpur with average annual inflows of 183,000 acre feet.

Murunj Dam project has three main objectives namely storage of water for irrigation and drinking purpose, flood mitigation and power generation.

The project will have gross water storage of 800,000 acre feet. May 30: Former Senator Javed Jabbar announced his resignation from the 10th National Finance Commission (NFC), citing political opposition in Balochistan.

May 30: The government declared wearing of masks mandatory at public places.

May 31: The Punjab government inflicted a huge cut of Rs3 billion on the Punjab police budget.

May 31: India expelled two officials of the Pakistani High Commission in Delhi accusing them of espionage.

May 31: Noted educationist Prof Anwar Ahmed Zai passed away.

Prof Ahmed Zai had served as the chairman of the Board of Intermediate Education Karachi (BIEK), the Board of Secondary Education Karachi (BSEK) and the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Mirpurkhas. He also served as the EDO Karachi and additional secretary of the provincial education department. At the time of his death, he was serving as the chairman of the Ziauddin University Examination Board.

June 01: PMIK announced the reopening of tourism industry and allowed all overseas Pakistanis to return home.

June 01: Dr Asif Farrukhi, an eminent short story writer, translator, critic and publisher, passed away.

About Dr Farrukhi

He was born in Karachi on Sept. 16, 1959. He went to St. Patrick's School and passed his intermediate exam from D.J. Science College. He did his MBBS from Dow Medical College in 1984 and obtained a Master's degree in public health from Harvard University.

From 1994 to 2004, he served as the health and nutrition programme officer at Unicef. In 2014, he joined Habib University as director of the Aarzu Centre for Regional Languages and Humanities.

Dr Farrukhi, along with Ameena Saiyid, founded the KLF for

Oxford University Pakistan (OUP) in 2010. It went on to become the country's foremost cultural event and put it on the global literary map.

Dr Farrukhi rose to literary prominence in 1982 with his first collection of Urdu short stories, *Aatash Fashan Per Khiley Gulab*. But his critical faculty and proficiency as an editor were also widely acknowledged. Among other books, he published a collection of critical essays on writer Saadat Hasan Manto and an anthology of writings on Karachi, *Look at the City from Here*. He was a recipient of the Tamgha-i-Imtiaz.

June 01: Law Minister Farogh Naseem resigned from the cabinet to represent the federal government in a case related to Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

June 01: The Supreme Court refused to suspend the acquittal of four men in the murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

June 02: Former Pakistan first-class cricketer Riaz Sheikh, aged 51, lost his life to Covid-19.

June 02: Sindh Minister for Human Settlement, Haji Ghulam Murtaza Baloch, passed away after battling coronavirus.

June 02: Member National Assembly (MNA) Munir Khan Orakzai passed away. He was 61.

June 03: Two members of the provincial assembly (MPAs), PML-N's Shaukat Manzoor Cheema from Punjab and PTI's Mian Jamshedud Din Kakakhel from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, passed away from Covid-19.

June 03: Seraiki linguist, researcher, critic, educationist and author of over 60 books Professor Shaukat Mughal passed away. He was 73.

June 04: Renowned intellectual and historian of Sindh, Atta Muhammad Bhanbhro, died at the age of 87.

Mohammad Sadiq

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Afghanistan Affairs

On June 06, veteran Pakistani diplomat Mohammad Sadiq was appointed the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Afghanistan Affairs.

Why Sadiq's Appointment?

Sadiq, who has served as Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan from 2008 to 2014, is a seasoned diplomat, enjoying a positive reputation as a professional. His tenure as ambassador of Pakistan in Afghanistan has been a high point in his cap, before he retired as secretary to the National Security Division in October 2016. As Pakistan has played a key role as

facilitator in the Afghan peace process until the Taliban and the United States signed the landmark agreement in February this year to end war in Afghanistan, Sadiq's role will be important in the future peace efforts. Besides the peace process, Sadiq faces a big challenge of how to normalize relations with Afghanistan as tense ties have badly affected bilateral engagements.



June 05: National Textile University (NTU), Faisalabad, and Shanghai University of Engineering Science (SUES), signed an agreement on textile cooperation.

June 05: Pakistan Army troops shot down an Indian spying quadcopter in Khanjar Sector along LoC.

June 05: Making parliamentary history, the budget session of the Punjab Assembly commenced at a local hotel instead of the assembly chambers.

June 07: The number of confirmed Covid-19 cases and related deaths across the country surged past 100,000 and 2,000, respectively.

June 08: The Supreme Court took back its decision to reopen markets on the weekends.

June 09: Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa held a meeting with Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani during his day-long visit to Kabul.

The COAS was accompanied by ISI Director, General Lt. Gen. Faiz Hamid, and the newly-appointed Pakistan's Special Representative on Afghanistan Muhammad Sadiq Khan.

June 09: Punjab Assembly unanimously passed the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Bill 2020. Under the law, the bill for which was moved by PML-Q's Khadeeja Umer, no Islamic content could be published in the books of Islamiyat, Pakistan Studies, History, Urdu Literature and other subjects until it is approved by the Muttehid Ulema Board. PCTB would have to seek approval of Ulema Board before publishing the content related to Islam.

June 09: Younis Khan and wrist spinner Mushtaq Ahmad were appointed batting and spin bowling coaches, respectively, for the England tour.

June 10: The current PTI government sent its first reference to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for taking further action against the accused in the Sugar Scandal Inquiry Report.

June 10: The Paris Club of creditor nations agreed to suspend debt service payments from Pakistan, Chad, Ethiopia and the Republic of Congo as part of a G20 debt relief deal.

About Paris Club

The Paris Club is an informal group of official creditors whose role is to find coordinated and sustainable solutions to the payment difficulties experienced by debtor countries. As debtor countries undertake reforms to stabilize and restore their macroeconomic and financial situation, Paris Club creditors provide an appropriate debt treatment. Paris Club creditors provide debt treatments to debtor countries in the form of rescheduling, which is debt relief by postponement or, in the case of concessional rescheduling, reduction in debt

service obligations during a defined period (flow treatment) or as of a set date (stock treatment).

The origin of the Paris Club dates back to 1956 when Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris. Since then, the Paris Club has reached 434 agreements with 90 different debtor countries. Since 1956, the debt treated in the framework of Paris Club agreements amounts to \$186 billion. The Club has 19 permanent members, including most of the western European and Scandinavian nations, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Japan.

June 11: Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, issued the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2019-20. According to the Survey, country's economy was stabilizing before the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic which inflicted huge losses and derailed it towards negative growth of 0.38%.

June 12: Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) approved the country's first Covid-19 testing kit. The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) developed these kits.

June 12: Minister for Industries and Production, Hammad Azhar, presented the federal budget 2020-21 with a total outlay of Rs7.136 trillion.

June 12: The government announced a comprehensive support package for frontline healthcare workers (HCWs).

June 13: PMIK announced that the hot spots of coronavirus across Pakistan will face strict lockdown as the health protocols would be strictly enforced.

June 13: The Punjab government issued a notification to universities, making it compulsory for their students to read Quran with Urdu translation.

June 14: Pakistan's Goodwill Ambassador Vanessa O'Brien took Pakistan's flag to the deepest point in the ocean named Challenger Deep, at 10,923 metres.



June 14: Sabiha Khanum, a leading Pakistani film star of yesteryears, passed away.

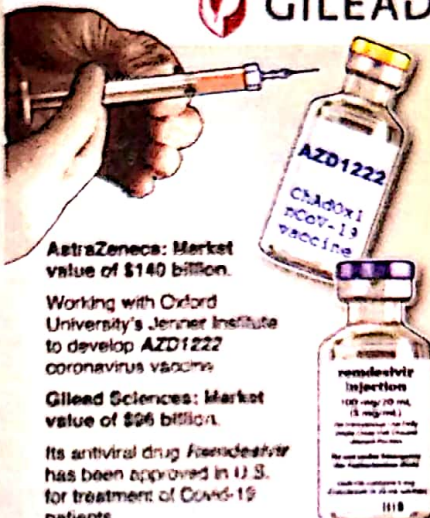
June 15: The Punjab government presented budget for fiscal year 2020-21 with a total outlay of 2.24 trillion.

June 15: The Sindh Assembly in its first ever virtual session unanimously passed a resolution recommending that wherever the name of Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is written "Khatam-un-Nabiyeen" (meaning that Prophet Muhammad SAW was last of the Prophets sent by Allah) would be written along with it.

June 15: Two officials of the Indian High Commission (HC) were arrested for hitting a citizen with their vehicle in Islamabad.

Largest healthcare deals on record

AstraZeneca  **GILEAD** 



AstraZeneca: Market value of \$140 billion.
Working with Oxford University's Jenner Institute to develop AZD1222 coronavirus vaccine

Gilead Sciences: Market value of \$96 billion.
Its antiviral drug Remdesivir has been approved in US for treatment of Covid-19 patients

Target company / Acquirer	Date	Value
Warner-Lambert / Pfizer	1999	\$90.2bn
SmithKline Beecham / Glaxo	2000	\$75.7bn
Celgene / Bristol-Myers Squibb	2019	\$74.0bn
Allergan / Actavis	2015	\$70.5bn
Aetna / CVS	2018	\$68.1bn
Express Scripts / Cigna	2018	\$67.0bn
Aventis / Sanofi	2004	\$64.2bn
Allergan / AbbVie	2020	\$63.0bn
Pharmacia / Pfizer	2002	\$60.0bn
Shire / Takeda	2019	\$48.0bn

INTERNATIONAL

May 16: India announced that global companies can invest up to 74pc in the country's defence manufacturing units, up from 49pc, without requiring any government approval.

May 16: US President Donald Trump named the world-renowned Muslim American immunologist, Moncef Mohamed Slaoui, to head 'Operation Warp Speed', a fast-track programme for finding a vaccine for Covid-19.

May 16: President Trump fired State Department Inspector General Steve Linick. He had opened a probe into Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

May 16: Rwandan genocide suspect Felicien Kabuga, who is accused of funding militias that massacred about 800,000 people, was arrested in France after 26 years on the run. Kabuga was Rwanda's most-wanted man and had a \$5 million US bounty on his head.

May 16: The fifth edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games, which was to be held in Konya, Turkey in 2021, was postponed due to clash of dates with the Tokyo Olympics 2020 now to be held in July-August 2021.

May 16: Iran sentenced French-Iranian academic Fariba Adelkhah to five years in prison on national security charges.

May 17: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival Dr Abdullah Abdullah signed the power-sharing deal.

May 17: Puerto Rico's governor, Wanda Vázquez, announced to hold a non-binding referendum in November to decide whether Puerto Rico should become a US state.

May 17: Canada's parliament went virtual, assembling MPs across six time zones.

May 17: Israel's parliament swore in a new unity government led by PM Benjamin Netanyahu and his former rival Benny Gantz, ending the longest political crisis in the nation's history.

May 18: Libya's UN-recognised government captured the strategic Al-Watiya airbase.

May 18: The WHO kicked off its first-ever virtual assembly.

About WHA

The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO. Every year, delegates from all 194 Member States of WHO gather to agree the Organization's priorities, leadership and budgets. At the Assembly, new health goals are set, and tasks are assigned in order to reach those goals. The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and

review and approve the proposed programme budget. The Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.

May 19: Etihad Airways flew aid for the Palestinians amid the coronavirus pandemic from the capital of the UAE into Israel.

May 20: The global coronavirus cases crossed 5 million.

May 21: President Trump announced his plans to withdraw the United States from the Open Skies Treaty with Russia.

May 21: In a world first, doctors in Japan successfully transplanted liver cells derived from embryonic stem cells into a newborn baby.

May 22: Former Inter Milan coach Gigi Simoni, winner of the UEFA Cup with a side which included the Brazilian Ronaldo, died at the age of 81.

May 22: Japan's Naomi Osaka surpassed Serena Williams as the world's highest-paid female athlete, raking in \$37.4 million in prize money and endorsements over the last year.

May 22: Australian tennis great Ashley Cooper, who won four Grand Slam singles titles in the 1950s, died. He was 83.

May 22: Salah Kashoggi, a son of slain Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, announced that his family has forgiven those who murdered their father.

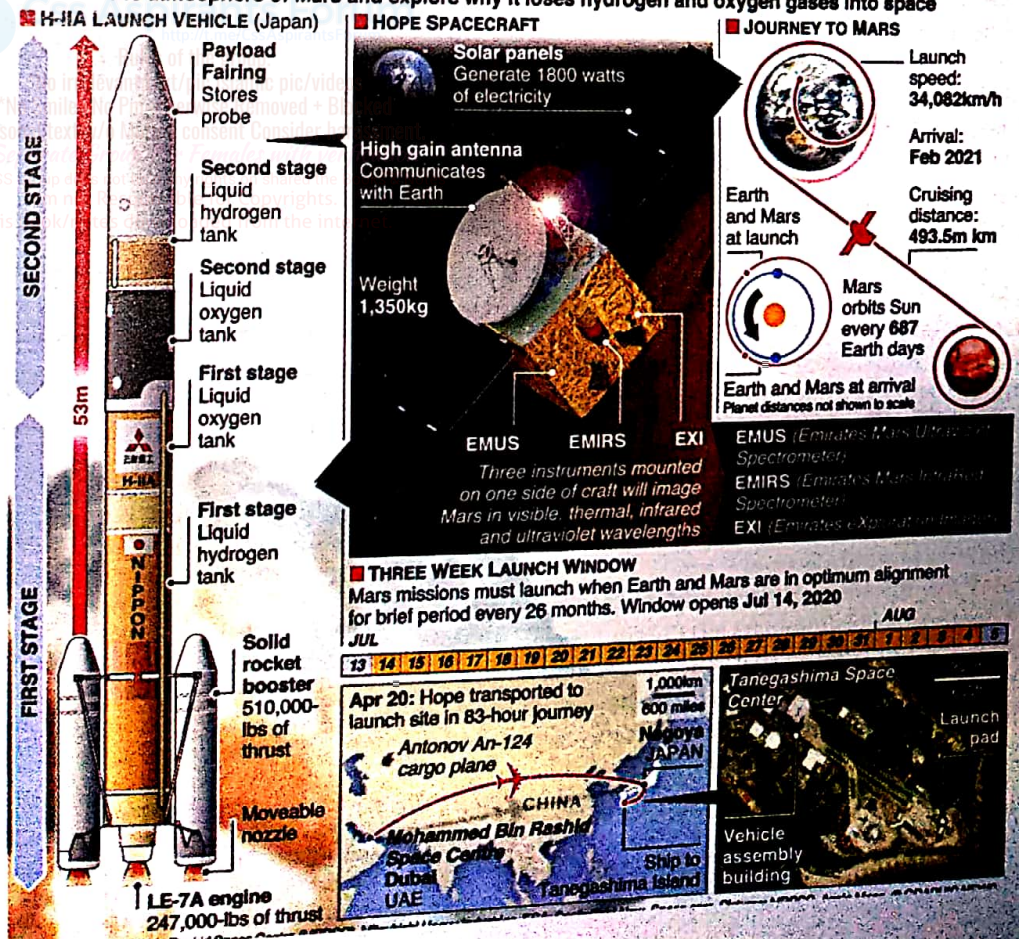
May 22: Researchers in Australia achieved a world record internet speed of 44.2 terabits per second, allowing users to download 1,000 HD movies in a single second.

May 25: India's three-time Olympic gold medallist Balbir Singh died at 95.

May 26: The Afghan government announced the release of 900 more Taliban prisoners.

UAE launching "Hope" mission to Mars

In the first planetary mission by any Arab country, the UAE's Hope probe will study the atmosphere of Mars and explore why it loses hydrogen and oxygen gases into space



Mobile Device Manufacturing Policy

On June 02, the Federal Cabinet approved the first-ever mobile device manufacturing policy.

The policy has been prepared by Engineering Development Board (EDB), a techno-economic arm of Ministry of Industries and Production (MoIP), through extensive consultation with relevant public and private sector stakeholders.

The salient features of the policy are as follows:

- Removal of Regulatory Duty for CKD/SKD manufacturing by PTA approved manufactures under Input/Output Co-Efficient Organization (IOCO) approved import authorization.
- Removal of Fixed Income Tax on CKD/SKD manufacturing of mobile devices up to USD 350 category.
- Increase in Fixed Income Tax on USD 351-500 USD category by Rs2000 and USD 500 by Rs6300 on CKD/SKD manufacturing only.
- Removal of Fixed Sales Tax on CKD/SKD manufacturing of mobile devices.
- PTA shall allow activation of handsets manufactured in the country under import authorization of inputs by IOCO in CKD/SKD kit

(8517.1211) and not under HS Code 8517.7000 i.e. parts. This will eliminate misdeclaration in parts category at the import stage. Activation of CBUs imported through notified routes after payment of all levied duties and taxes as fixed by government from time to time shall continue till further amendment.

f. In up to USD 30 category, words "except smart phones" to be inserted for CBU imports under 8517.1219 to avoid misdeclaration.

g. R&D allowance of 3% to be given to local manufacturers for exports of mobile phones.

h. Locally assembled /manufactured phones to be exempted from 4% of withholding tax on domestic sales.

i. Government to commit maintaining tariff differential between CBU and CKD/SKD till the expiry of the policy.

j. Local industry to ensure localization of parts and components as per roadmap included in draft policy.

k. EDB to act as Secretariat of Mobile Phone Manufacturing Policy and ensure development of allied parts, components and devices.

May 26: Stanley Ho, the Hong Kong-born tycoon who made billions transforming neighbouring Macau from a sleepy Portuguese outpost into the world's biggest gambling hub, died at 98.

May 27: Quarraisha Abdool Karim, a South African HIV researcher who found that a topical gel could stop many women catching the virus won the half a million-euro (\$551,000) Christophe Merieux Prize, one of France's top science prizes.

May 27: The United States revoked Hong Kong's special status under US law, paving the way to strip trading privileges for the territory.

May 27: The Vatican exiled Enzo Bianchi, a Catholic layman who founded the Bose Monastery in northern Italy.

May 27: Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra (Holy land of Ram's birthplace) Trust chairman Mahant Nritya Gopal Das announced that the construction of the Ram temple has started.

May 28: China's parliament approved a security law on Hong Kong.

May 27: British Pakistani Raffia Arshad became the first ever hijab-wearing deputy district judge in UK.

May 28: Former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad was sacked from the Malay-centric party he co-founded and led to victory in the 2018 general election.

May 28: Britain shuttered its embassy in North Korea and all its diplomats left the country.

May 29: In response to Twitter's labelling of his tweet about the Minnesota protests—explaining that the tweet violated the company's rules—President Trump signed an executive order seeking to transform the way social media companies are regulated.

May 29: The coronavirus pandemic prompted the United Nations to delay the COP26, a crucial

climate summit, which was being billed as the most important climate change summit since the 2015 talks that produced the Paris Agreement, until Nov. 1 to 12, 2021. Glasgow, Scotland will remain the host city.

May 30: In a letter to Indian Home Minister Amit Shah, Maria Arena, the chairperson of European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, condemned the arrest of rights defenders under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

May 30: SpaceX, the private rocket company of billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk, launched two Americans toward orbit from Florida in a mission that marks the first spaceflight of Nasa astronauts from US soil in nine years.

May 31: President Trump postponed a Group of Seven (G7) summit until September or later and expand the list of invitees to include Australia, Russia, South Korea and India.

Pakistani nuclear forces, January 2020

Type (US/Pakistani designation)	Launchers deployed	Year first deployed	Range (km) ^a	Warheads x yield ^b	No. of warheads ^c
Aircraft	36				36
F-16A/B ^d	..	1998	1 600	1 x bomb	..
Mirage III/V	36	1998	2 100	1 x bomb	36
				or Raad ALCM ^e	
Land-based missiles	120 ^f				120
Abdali (Hatf-2)	10	2015	200	1 x 512 kt	10
Ghaznavi (Hatf-3)	16	2004	300	1 x 512 kt	16
Shaheen-I (Hatf-4)	16	2003	750	1 x 512 kt	16
Shaheen-IA (Hatf-4) ^g	..	[2020]	900	1 x 512 kt	..
Shaheen-II (Hatf-6)	18	2014	2 000	1 x 1040 kt	18
Shaheen-III (Hatf-..) ^h	..	[2022]	2 750	1 x 1040 kt	..
Ghauri (Hatf-5)	24	2003	1 250	1 x 1040 kt	24
Nasr (Hatf-9)	24	2013	70	1 x 512 kt	24
Ababeel (Hatf-..)	2 200	MIRV or MRV	..
Babur GLCM (Hatf-7)	12	2014	350 ^j	1 x 512 kt	12
Babur-2 GLCM (Hatf-..) ^k	700	1 x 512 kt	..
Sea-based missiles					
Babur-3 SLCM (Hatf-..)	0	.. ^l	450	1 x 512 kt	0
Other stored warheads^m					
Total	156				156

May 31: SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule carrying NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley docked with the International Space Station (ISS).

May 31: American sprinter Bobby Joe Morrow, who won three gold medals at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, died at the age of 84.

June 01: Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia will vote on July 1 on constitutional reforms that could extend his rule beyond 2024.

June 02: Nine-times motorcycling world champion Carlo Ubbiali, who raced in the first world championship in 1949 and later dominated the 125 and 250cc categories, died at 90.

June 02: Renowned Yemeni journalist Nabil Hasan al-Qaety was gunned down.

June 02: Richard Grenell, an outspoken Trump loyalist, officially stepped down as US ambassador to Germany.



June 03: Israel successfully tested two Long-Range Artillery Weapon Systems ballistic missiles in the Mediterranean.

June 03: James Miller, a former principal deputy undersecretary of defence for policy, resigned from the Defence Department's science board.

June 03: Stephen Wamukota, a nine-year-old Kenyan boy who made a wooden hand-washing machine to help curb the spread of coronavirus, was given a presidential award.

June 03: Using aerial remote sensing, scientists discovered the largest and oldest-known structure built by the ancient Maya civilization—a colossal rectangular elevated platform built between 1,000 and 800 BC in Mexico's Tabasco state.

June 03: As part of its new military doctrine, Russia laid out rules for resorting to nuclear weapons in the event of war.

A look at the doctrine

The document outlines four scenarios in which Moscow would order the use of nuclear weapons, two of them new and involving potential instances of nuclear first-use. The established protocol permits use when an enemy uses nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction on Russia or its allies, and in situations when conventional weapons "threaten the very existence of the country." The two new provisions include cases in which the government receives "reliable information" that a ballistic missile attack is imminent or enemies damage the nation's critical and military facilities to the degree that the ability to retaliate with nuclear weapons is disrupted. The document describes containing and deterring aggressions against Russia as being "among the highest national priorities." Ultimately, Moscow's nuclear weapons policy is described as being "defensive in nature" and designed to safeguard the country's sovereignty against potential adversaries.

June 03: The US suspended all flights by Chinese airlines into and out of the country after Beijing did not allow American carriers to resume services to China.

June 04: During a virtual summit between Indian Prime

GK Tidbits

1. Captain of the first Western ship to reach the east coast of Australia was: **James Cook**
2. James Cook belonged to: **The United Kingdom**
3. Earth's deepest point is: **Challenger Deep**
4. The depth of the Challenger Deep is: **10,923m**
5. The driest non-polar desert in the world, The Atacama, is located in: **Chile**
6. The world's most advanced radio telescope, also called Earth's Eyes on the Skies, is located in: **Chile**
7. Mount Disappointment is an 800-metre (2,600 ft) mountain located in: **Australia**
8. World Oceans Day is observed on: **8 June**
9. Greeks invaded Punjab in: **4th century BC**
10. "Thus Spoke: A Book for All and None" is a philosophical novel written by: **Friedrich Nietzsche**
11. Pakistani Navy War College is located in: **Lahore**
12. The Shishper glacier is located a few kilometres away from Hasanabad village in: **Gilgit-Baltistan**
13. Chaukhandi Tombs is a centuries-old archaeological monument situated in: **Karachi**
14. Fahrenheit and Celsius scales are equal at: **-40°C**
15. Kalapani is a territory disputed between India and: **Nepal**

16. The Himalayas are divided into three ranges namely Himadri, Himachal and: **Sivalik**
17. The Open Skies Treaty was signed in: **2002**
18. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formed in: **2003**
19. The Commonwealth Grouping was constituted through London Declaration in: **1949**
20. Abdullah Bhatti, alias Dulla Bhatti, a legendary hero of Punjab was from: **16th Century**
21. The Mughal ruler whose rule in Punjab was challenged by Dulla Bhatti was: **Akbar**
22. Dulla Bhatti was hanged in: **1599**
23. Dulla Bhatti is buried in the historical graveyard of: **Miani Sahib (Lahore)**
24. Pakistan joined UN on: **Sept. 30, 1947**
25. The UN medal was established by the UN Secretary-General in: **1966**
26. The UNSC created "the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage" in: **2014**
27. Holy See is another name of: **Vatican City**
28. The Vatican City achieved independence from Italy in: **1929**
29. Pakistan's current ambassador to China is: **Naghmana Hashmi**

30. World Bank's country director to Pakistan is: **Patchamuthu Illangovan**
31. The making of maps and charts is known as: **Cartography**
32. Sikh rule over Punjab lasted from 1768 to: **1849**
33. The Rwandan genocide, also known as the genocide against the Tutsi, took place in: **1994**
34. Jean-Yves Le Drian is the current foreign minister of: **France**
35. The first transatlantic radio broadcast was made in: **1901**
36. British computer scientist who invented the World Wide Web in 1989 was: **Tim Berners-Lee**
37. Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation is commonly known as: **LASER**
38. Elon Musk's aerospace company is: **SpaceX**
39. The Microsoft XP operating system was released in: **2001**
40. The Graphics Interchange Format is a bitmap image format commonly known as: **GIF**
41. Social media app that only lets you view pictures and message for a limited time is: **Snapchat**
42. The capital of Belarus, a landlocked country in Eastern Europe, is: **Minsk**

Minister Narendra Modi and Australia's premier Scott Morrison, India and Australia sealed an accord—the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement—to grant access to each other's military bases for mutual defence exchanges and exercises.

June 05: European Union's climate monitoring network announced that the world experienced its warmest May on record as temperatures soared 10 degrees Celsius above average last month even in Siberia that is home to much of Earth's permafrost. May 2020 was 0.63°C warmer than the average May from 1981 to 2010.

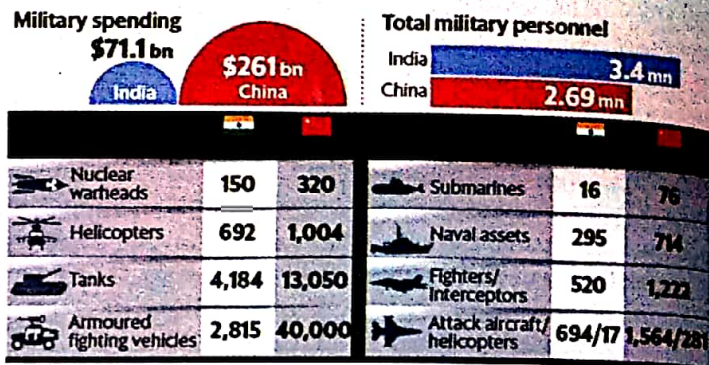
June 05: The International Atomic Energy Agency reported that Iran has continued to increase its stockpiles of enriched uranium and remains in violation of its deal with world powers.

June 06: President Trump ordered the military to remove 9,500 troops from Germany. The move would reduce US troops numbers in Germany to 25,000, from the 34,500 currently there.

June 06: Former Vice President Joe Biden formally clinched

the Democratic presidential nomination.

June 06: Top Chinese and Indian generals held high-level talks in a Himalayan outpost in a bid to end the latest border standoff.



June 07: Kurt Thomas, the first US male gymnast to win a world championship gold medal, died. He was 64.

June 09: Palestinian prime minister Mohammad Shtayyeh announced Palestine will declare statehood over all of the West Bank and Gaza, with al-Quds as its capital, and push for global recognition if Israel goes ahead with plans to annex land it occupies.

June 10: Israel's Supreme Court struck down a law that had retroactively legalised about 4,000 settler homes built on privately-owned Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank.

June 10: Swedish prosecutors named Stig Engstrom, a former advertising consultant, as their main suspect in the 1986 killing of Sweden's prime

The infrared thermometer

Advantages

Reduce cross-contamination risk and minimize risk of spreading disease

Easy to use, easy to clean and disinfect

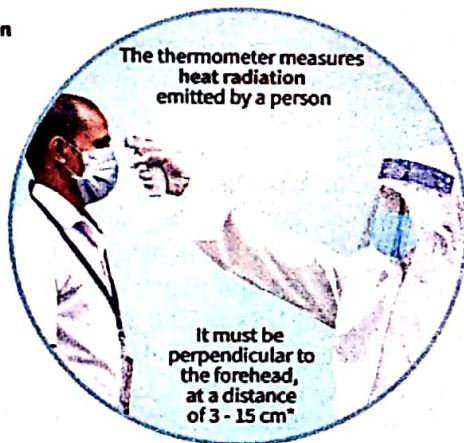
Displays a reading rapidly

Limitations

The environment and handling of the thermometer may affect the measurement

Use of personal protective equipment by operator is recommended

How does it work?



Proper use

Use in a draft-free space and out of direct sun or near radiant heat sources

Ambient temperature: between 16° and 40°C

Relative humidity: below 85%

Forehead must be clean, dry and unobstructed during measurement

The person being measured must stand still

GK Tidbits

43. The largest landlocked country in the world by area is: **Kazakhstan**
44. The currency of Vietnam is: **Vietnamese dong**
45. The continent on which most of the 13 countries through which the Equator passes are located is: **Africa**
46. The continent on which Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil are located is: **South America**
47. The Equator passes through two Asian countries, **Maldives and Indonesia**
48. The highest peak in Africa, Mt. Kilimanjaro, is located in: **Tanzania**
49. The city where one would have to cross the 'blue' Danube is: **Vienna**
50. The city linked by canal with Rotterdam and Amsterdam that serves as the seat of the Netherlands government is: **The Hague**
51. Casablanca is the largest city in: **Morocco**
52. The two countries that have a border with Liechtenstein are: **Switzerland and Austria**
53. The species also called the Portuguese man-of-war is a: **Jellyfish**
54. The fastest two-legged land animal on earth is:

- Ostrich**
55. The living bird with the largest wingspan is: **The wandering albatross**
56. The author of the book 'The Rights of Man' is: **Thomas Paine**
57. The only snake that builds a nest is: **King cobra**
58. East India Company established its first presidency bank in: **Calcutta**
59. The element used as a moderator in a nuclear reactor is: **Graphite**
60. The planet that looks reddish in the night sky is: **Mars**
61. The number of player in a team of baseball is: **9**
62. In 1610, Galileo Galilei discovered four moons of: **Jupiter**
63. The element that does not occur in nature but can be produced artificially is: **Plutonium**
64. Cryogenic engines are used in: **Rocket technology**
65. The instrument used to find out wind direction is: **Wind vane**
66. The vitamin that is considered a hormone is: **Vitamin D**

67. The element found on the surface of the moon is: **Titanium**
68. The 'Beaufort Scale' is used to measure: **Wind velocity**
69. Relative humidity decreases with increase in: **Temperature**
70. The Sultan of Delhi who built the biggest network of canals in India was: **Feroze Shah Tughluq**
71. 'Foot and Mouth Disease' is found in: **Cattle**
72. The animal which respire by skin is: **Frog**
73. The Ruhr-Westphalia region is a famous industrial region of: **Germany**
74. The first English-language newspaper and the first printed newspaper to be published in both the Indian Subcontinent and in Asia was: **Hicky's Bengal Gazette**
75. The official mascots of the 2022 Asian Games are: **Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen**
76. The 19th Asian Games will be held in 2022 at: **Hangzhou, China**
77. Three robots, Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen, are nicknamed as: **Smart Triplets**
78. A resolution on Covid-19 titled 'Global solidarity

minister Olof Palme, closing the murder case that has gripped the Scandinavian country for 3 decades.
Palme was gunned down on the evening of February 28, 1986, after leaving a Stockholm cinema with his wife.

June 10: The US Senate unanimously confirmed Gen. Charles Brown Jr. as chief of staff of the US Air Force, making him the first black officer to lead one of the nation's military services.

June 11: Anti-racism protesters in Virginia tore down a statue of Christopher Columbus in Byrd park in Richmond. Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451 and his voyages across the Atlantic opened the way for European colonisation of the Americas.

He first arrived in the Americas on Oct. 12, 1492, a date marked as Columbus Day in the United States, a federal holiday.

June 11: Turkey's parliament passed a bill giving neighbourhood patrols greater powers.

June 11: Philip Manshaus, far-right Norwegian man who attempted to kill worshippers in a mosque shooting spree, was jailed for 21 years.

June 11: Syrian President Bashar al-Assad sacked his prime minister Imad Muhammad Dib Khamis.

June 11: Malaysia pulled out of Hajj over coronavirus fears.

June 11: President Trump issued an executive order authorising US sanctions against International Criminal Court employees involved in an investigation into whether American forces committed war crimes in Afghanistan.

June 12: A group of newly-discovered spiders was named after Swedish climate campaigner Greta Thunberg. Thunberg gen. nov. is a new genus of huntsman spiders from Madagascar.

THE WORLD'S HIGHEST-PAID ATHLETES

via Forbes

	EARNINGS (JUNE 1, 2019- JUNE 1, 2020)
1 Roger Federer	\$106.3M
2 Cristiano Ronaldo	\$105M
3 Lionel Messi	\$104M
4 Neymar	\$95.5M
5 LeBron James	\$88.2M
6 Stephen Curry	\$74.4M
7 Kevin Durant	\$63.9M
8 Tiger Woods	\$62.3M
9 Kirk Cousins	\$60.5M
10 Carson Wentz	\$59.1M



June 12: Kathy Lueders, a NASA official who managed the recent inaugural private crewed flight into space promoted to lead NASA's Human Exploration & Operations Mission Directorate, becoming the first female head of human spaceflight

June 13: The lower house of Nepal's parliament approved a new map of the country, including areas disputed with India.

June 13: Vasant Raiji, the world's oldest first-class cricketer, died aged 100 in Mumbai.

June 14: Burundi's president, Pierre Nkurunziza, died of coronavirus.

June 14: Sushant Singh Rajput, a young Bollywood heartthrob, famous in Pakistan for his role of Sarfraz in Amir Khan's PK, committed suicide.

June 15: After months of coronavirus curbs, a raft of EU nations reopened their borders to fellow Europeans.

June 15: A Paris court found three former French government officials and three others guilty on charges involving millions of euros in kickbacks from arms sales to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed in 1994. The three former aides are Nicolas Bazire, Balladur's former campaign manager; Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, a former advisor to his defence minister

Francois Leotard; and Thierry Gaubert, a former aide to then budget minister Nicolas Sarkozy.

These were the first convictions to emerge from the sprawling investigation named after the Pakistani city where a bus carrying French defence engineers was blown up in 2002, killing 15 people.

GK Tidbits

to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) has been adopted by: **United Nations**

79. The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is celebrated on: **April 4**

80. According to Forbes' recent world's billionaires list, the richest person in the world is: **Jeff Bezos**

81. Jeff Bezos is the founder and CEO of: **Amazon**

82. The official name of the Mars 2020 rover of NASA is: **Perseverance**

83. 'World Economic Outlook (WEO)' is the flagship report of: **International Monetary Fund**

84. The term 'Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction', is a process used for: **Testing Coronavirus**

85. World Health Organization is headquartered in: **Geneva, Switzerland**

86. Due to bite of mad dog, the disease

hydrophobia is caused by the virus named: **Rabies**

87. The principal reason for the formation of metamorphic rocks is: **Extreme heat and pressure**

88. In human body, Cowper's glands form a part of: **Reproductive system**

89. The term 'Tennis Court Oath' is associated with: **French Revolution**

90. The Sargasso sea is in: **North Atlantic Ocean**

91. The term "Orange Revolution" is associated with: **Ukraine**

WHAT IS ASTEROID BELT ?

The asteroid belt is a region of space between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter where most of the asteroids are found orbiting the Sun.

92. The world's most populous city is: **Tokyo, Japan**

93. The country that has the briefest constitution in the world is: **USA**

94. The secretion of droplets of water from the pores of plants is called: **Guttation**

95. The Mughal emperor who was called Zinda Pir (living saint) was: **Aurangzeb Alamgir**

96. The first railway line on the Indian Subcontinent was opened in: **1853**

97. The study of growth and development of embryo is called: **Embryology**

98. Angular separation between two colours of the spectrum depends on: **Angle of deviation**

99. The headquarters of International Atomic Energy Agency is located in: **Vienna, Austria**

100. The element with the highest first ionization potential is: **Nitrogen**